



TRADITIONS OF THE TIGRIS

by
DIKRAN SPEAR
1 9 4 6



M. MINASIAN

Traditions of the Tigris



By Dikran Spear

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To

Howard Hark Hancockjian

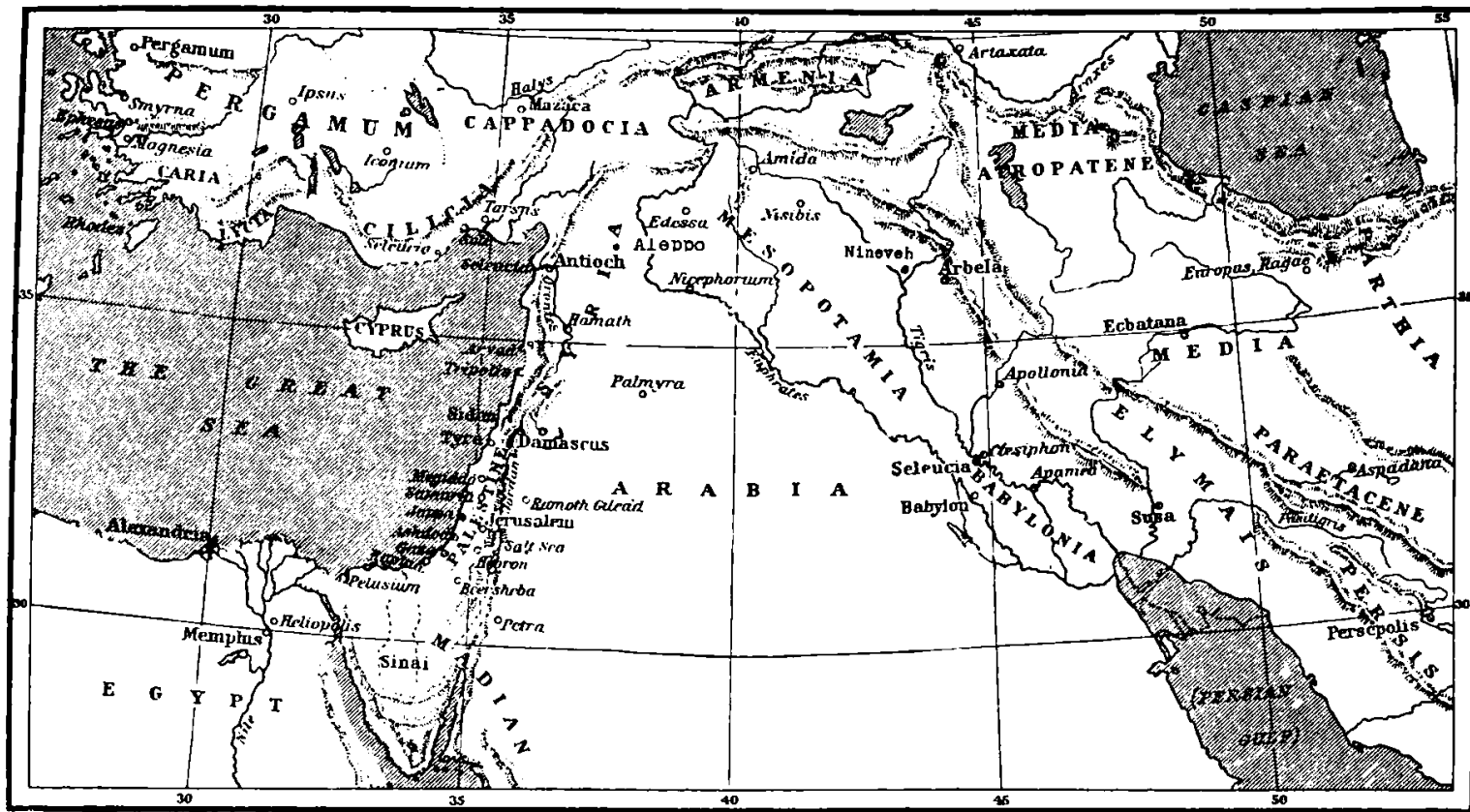
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The illustrations used in this book, while few are not original, they have been collected during a period of 50 years, the sources of which cannot be traced now, as at that time the writer had no thought of publishing them, hence the absence of notation of their original publications. However, THIS IS NOTED WITH GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT!

First Printing, April 1946.



In this map showing several ancient countries at about 187 B.C., Tigris is not joined with Euphrates. In the 14th or 15th century, the junction of these rivers was at Korma, some 30 miles above Garat Ali, the present point of union, known as the Shat-el-Arab, until it empties into the Persian Gulf some 70 miles lower down.

Prefatory Note

To collect the traditional tales of the Tigris as reminders of our past — remote as well as near — meanwhile sketching the characteristics of the land of our forefathers, have been in my thoughts for over a score of years, since the original narrators, our elders — departed from this life one by one.

I kept the original simplicity of the narrations even to the extent disregarding the grammatical laws. I desire to present them as they have been preserved.

Nearly half a century near the banks of the Hudson — North River! — I have lived. But the dream of my young manhood days, to see civilization established in the land of the Tigris, and Armenia liberated from the barbaric yoke of the enemy, became more and more weighty on my mind with the passing of years. The grandeur of the hills, the charms of the vales and flower-studded fields of my birth place, yes, the ruins of the villages and towns are ever present in my vision; to give a scant picture of them is but a solace to the writer.

Wikram Spear

January, 1946. Weehawken, N. J.



"The Angel guides Tobias into Media".— With a companion and guide, who was the angel Raphael posing as Azarias, a cousin, Tobias leaves Nineveh. At left the fish is caught and he carries it to Ecbatane, a city of Media, into the house of his prospective father-in-law.



"Tobit's Sight Restored".—With the gall of the fish Tobias annoints his father's eyes. Tobit's eyesight is restored and they want to reward the angel, who exhorts them and reveals his identity; after reassuring them he was seen no more. From Matthew Merian's "Icones Biblicae", engraved in 1625, printed in Amsterdam.

The River



SILVERY TIGRIS! What mystic hand designed thy course that parallels the destiny of my nation! Always gliding gracefully, always sweet as the sweetness of the Garden thou flowest from, thou art hugging my beloved Amida as a pendant around the neck of a budding bride; thou art flowing, now silently, now with the tumult of the rapid, between “mother” Araxes and “great” Euphrates, as the force Armenia herself once was between Rome and Persia, between Turkey and Russia; thou art gliding gently and generously towards the sun-burned desert of Assyria to irrigate, to fertilize that sun-baked land, to bring forth sorely needed green and vegetation, as the vanguards of my native land went forward to enlighten the semi-barbaric nations of the south and west, to set an example of the purity of family,* to teach, by example and practice, the principles of patriotism and Christianity; thou art “the third head parted from the river that went out of Eden to water the garden,”** as my nation branched out from the third son of mankind’s second forefather—Noah, whose son Japhet became the great-grand-father of Haig, the founder of Hayk, the nation, and Haygazian Dynasty. And lastly, thou wert called Hiddekel by Hebrews but changed to Tigris by the Greeks and and Latins, as they called our nation Armenian and our land Armenia, whereas we cling to the musical names of **Hay** and **Hayasdan!**

*The noble example of Ara the Handsome.

**Genesis 2: 10.

O roaring river! How often thou didst drown the tumultuous roars of the roaring armies of Assyria, of Persia, of Macedonia, and of Rome, when they attempted to cross thy rapids in pursuit of their enemy or to attack the capitals of Armenia—Tigranocerta and Artaxata. Bold, brave, daughty warriors were carried across or down the stream with great numbers after sacrificing many of their selected groups; they found out to their immense sorrow that thine other title was **Idiglat**,* the classic etymology of which attributed to meaning **arrow**, in consequence of the prodigious rapidity of thy current. Yet, thou art incomparable to any and all famous rivers, Danube¹, Rhine², Seine³, Thames⁴, and Tiber⁵ in Europe; Don⁶, Yangtze⁷, Ganges⁸ in Asia; Amazon⁹, Mississippi¹⁰ in Americas; even “Father” Nile¹¹ in Africa can not boast to have half of thy fame—performing a miracle besides being the cause of military strife among nations. Few of these exceed thee in length, in volume of waters, in more usefulness of commercial character, but none, yes, neither one of these can give to mankind a historical-religious story of a miraculous accomplishment guided and instructed by an angel. Both Jew and Gentile give credence to this biblical incident the beneficiary of which is a pious man, faithful to the Lord. Tobit, a captive in Nineveh, was afflicted with blindness. His son Tobias caught the fish which leaped out of thy waters, and, instructed by the angel opens it, takes out the heart, the liver, and the gall, the first two to smoke out an evil spirit from the bridal chamber of the newly-weds—Tobias, himself, and Sara his wife—and the third, to cure the blindness of his father.**

*Of Persian Origin.

(1) 1700 miles; (2) 850 miles; (3) 482 miles; (4) 209 miles; (5) 240 miles; (6) 1325 miles; (7) 3000 miles; (8) 1500 miles; (9) 4000 miles; (10) 4221 miles, (the longest in the world); (11) 4000 miles, (second in length of rivers of the globe).

The Tigris, flowing from the Taurus range S. E. 1,150 miles to join the Euphrates, 1800 miles, with which, near the head of the Persian Gulf, it forms the Shat-el-Arab. The Araxes is about 600 miles.

**The Book of Tobit in Apocrypha, Chap. 6.

O beautiful river! Thou hast attracted man from ancient times to raise magnificent cities near and around thee, to build palaces glorifying the greatness of his empire, temples to worship his gods — the sun, the moon, and other man-created divinities; Nineveh, Seleucia, Ctesiphon, once were landmarks of civilization, proud haughty, bathed in glory; the most outstanding of these, Nineveh, stood on your east bank, with her glowing buildings, like a cluster of jewels as to make her the queen of the known world. Only to be replaced by enduring structures to glorify the Almighty; Church, chapels, monasteries studded thy territory when Christianity became the true religion of Armenia, and cathedrals in splendor rose in places where forts and fortifications once stood. Thy people labored diligently to make their creations enduring, everlasting; man and nature, in harmony, succeeded in making the territory a land of happiness.

The four seasons of the region are enhanced and influenced by thy beauty. In the spring, the Tigris valley displays a picturesque panorama of fruit orchards and vegetation. In the summer, on thy pebbled right bank Amida's famous watermelons grow, in size** and in sweetness of taste unsurpassed anywhere. In the fall, the vineyards on the hills on thy left bank bring forth sparkling grapes grown and trained in the same manner as mankind's second father established at the base of Mount Ararat. And in the winter, when severe cold dominates the region and the northern storm blows over valley and hill, blanketing everywhere with heavy snow, thy silvery water turns into a shining solid mass of ice. This occurs once in a generation as the first one remembered by my elders has occurred "four years after the Crimean War of 1853". This is the date remembered by them for

**Weighing approximately 188 lbs. each, so large that when a person of medium height sat on it his feet would not touch the ground.

lack of other records. And a second time in 1887 when the cascade near by was also frozen turning into a solid pillar of ice. The Armenians, thy people, would go an hour's journey to enjoy the occurrence: some cooking **bulgur** on fire pots carried from the city; bands would play and young men and young women would dance on thine ice; more audacious young men would jump down from the bridge to prove the solidness and resistance of the ice. The elders, like self made naturalists, would discuss how the water-fall froze—did the freezing begin from the top and gradually come down, or did it begin to freeze from the bottom and go up to the top? The question ever remained unanswered.

When the ice and snow melt, the rushing water forming a fierce Phlegethon, makes it a thundering waterfall whose foams and unceasing shower howl and pound upon the immense rocks below, to find its tortuous way to unite with the water of the mother river.

O thou faire, miraculous stream! Since time immemorial thou hast given a free access to the people of all classes to journey down the stream on their ancient rafts, (**Kelleks**, of wood supported on inflated skins), or carrying their merchandise for the need of their neighbors. To do this thou didst not require any human sacrifice*, nor any special homage from any one. Thou wert running free, and, gave your services free.

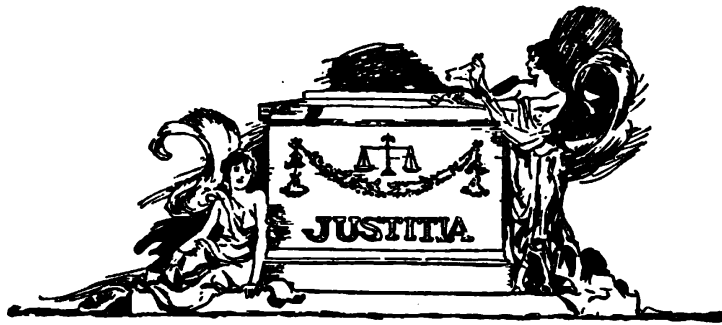
But, alas! There is a bloody day in thy recent history, a day of profound sadness when the enemy used this means of transportation to destroy the population of my beloved Amida. June 19, 1915, was the day when the bloody Turks, encouraged by their equally bloody Teutonic master, Kaiser Wilhelm II, loaded

*It was an ancient custom in Egypt to sacrifice annually a virgin to the Nile to insure a plentiful inundation.

the rafts with the leading Armenians of Amida to carry them to their destruction. Their blood mixed with thy sweet water, and corpses were carried down to the gulf. Upwards to a million Armenians were exterminated in that year, setting an example of mass annihilation. They became the first innocent victims of the First World War, to be followed by more millions of other victims in the Second World War. And the same Turks today, unrepented, unpunished, boast about their cowardly accomplishments!

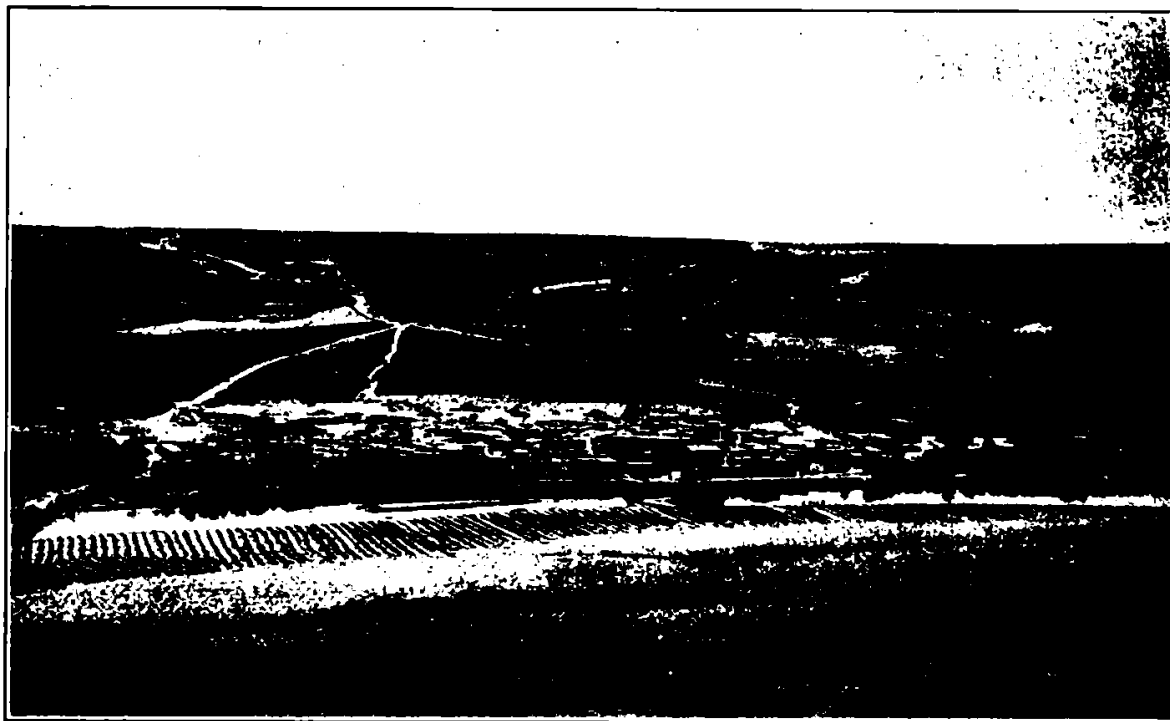
But as I write these lines from the banks of the Hudson, the words of the ever-remembered Royal Psalmist weighs heavily on my mind —

“If I forget thee O Tigris, may my right hand whither . . . ”.

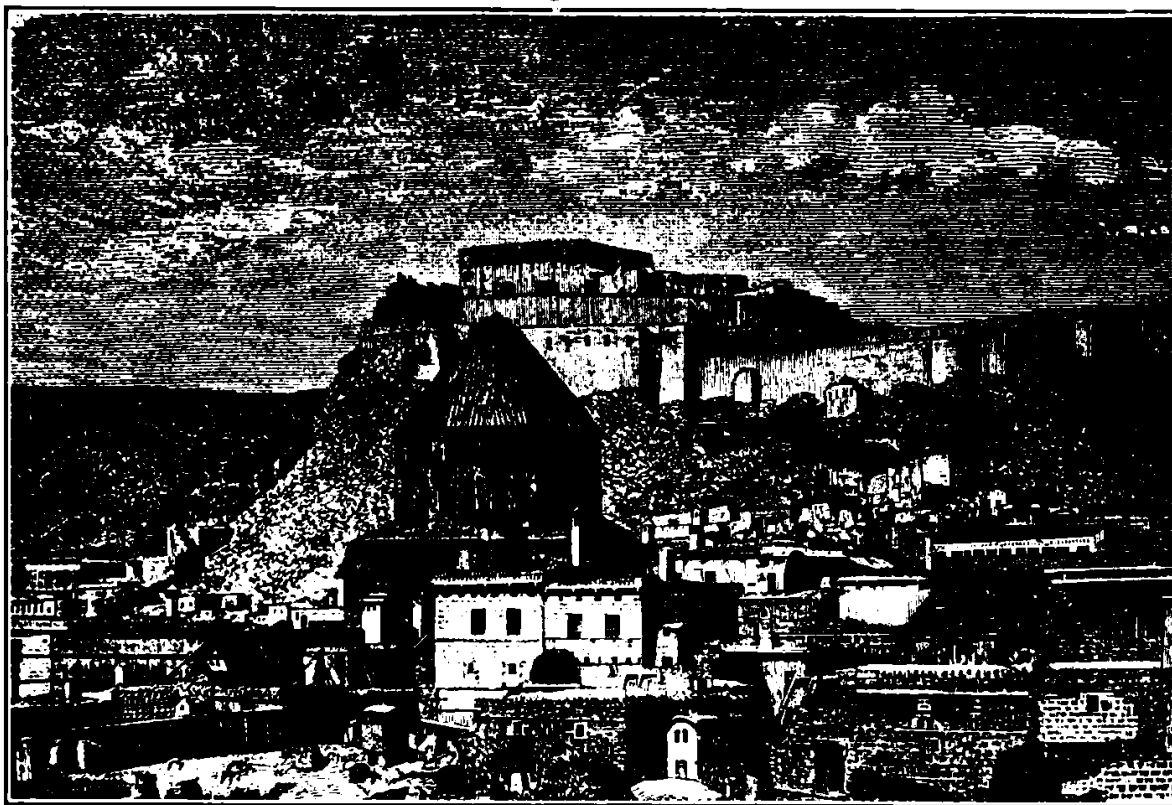




Amida's Waterfall in Summer Time

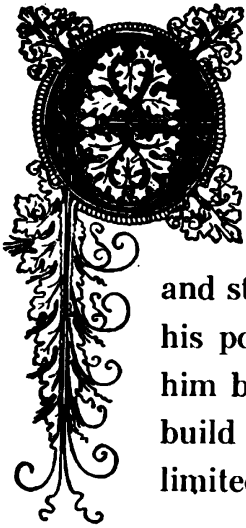


“... on thy pebbled right bank Amida’s famous watermelons grow.”
The Tigris runs closely in front of the **Keterbel** village. Beyond are the vineyards.



Gars — The Citadel and the Church of Sts. Apostles
(Ancient View)

King Appas



NCE upon a time there was a kind-hearted and justice-loving king named Appas. He lived in the city of Gars. Besides the city he also possessed many counties with cultivated fruit orchards, towns with flourishing populations, and strong based fortresses. From the income of all his possessions and with the wealth bequeathed to him by his father, he could, if occasion warranted, build a golden dam against the river Araxes. So unlimited was the source of his wealth.

The king was a modest, considerate, sympathetic, virtuous, a highly trust-worthy man. He abhorred all wars; never shed in vain the blood of his people; with extreme far-sightedness, like a wide-awake farmer, he labored for the progress and prosperity of his country. He established educational institutions for the advancement of learning for the entire population. During his reign, no sufferer ever shed a tear in misery, instead, all his subjects lived a happy life, blessing their ruler and imploring the Almighty to grant him a long life.

As soon as he ascends the throne, this king resolves to safeguard the liberties of all races and nationalities under his rule. He succeeded. Next, as a kind Christian, he creates a **special**

committee from his ministers, orders them to investigate all the counties within the realm; to inquire carefully into moral, economical and physical conditions of the country; locate any poor persons, neglected orphans, widows, down-troddens, and any and all sufferers, innumrating their names and families, to present to him.

The command of this great king is carried on minutely; the officers traveling from city to city to fulfill the wish of the ruler of the land. Every year, from his royal treasury a large sum is distributed; the happy people live in perpetual gladness and God is glorified by it, for "the hearts of terrestrial rulers are in the Hand of the Creator".

One day King Appas called his grand vizier, Prince Sempad, in whose care was placed the welfare of the poor, and after close scrutiny, he made himself acquainted with the conditions of the people. The grand vizier, who was the king's loving brother, described with glowing colors the serene life of the people and added: " . . . Brave sovereign, from the day of thine happy enthronement, our country has become a paradise and a treasure house of gold. An enviable kingdom to the angels of heaven; to the enemies, thy Fatherland is respectable and reputable . . . Ah! Wish thou could have accompanied me, my Lord, and see with thine own eyes what I have seen, and hear what I have heard . . . "

"Sempad," answered the king, "up to this day I didn't shed a drop of blood from the enemies of my Fatherland, neither from a lazy, treacherous subject, because my ivory throne is respected everywhere. Yes, I am, indeed, happy; happy is my Fatherland; neither did I see an enemy, nor an offending subject. I hope to God such be the days of my successors . . . "

“Glory be thine, O grand King! Luck didst guide thy path from enemies and offending subjects; neither tears dampened the pedestal of thy throne. Blessed be the days of thy life, as is the wish of our nation.”

“Prince Sempad, I desire to hear in person our loving nation’s complaints if there be any, and their blessings. What do you say in regards to this desire of mine?”

“My kind King certainly can have his desire fulfilled.”

“Therefore, dear brother, let us go tonight on an inspection tour, disguised.”

The same night two silvery-haired friars, each with a clerical walking staff, dressed as traveling clergymen, were traversing the streets of Gars. For hours they walked through the narrow, winding streets of the city. All around it was heard the music of merry-making, of songs of happiness, of pleasant vociferations of gatherings, of banquets.

“Do you hear them?”, asked one to the other. “There is the happy people.”

They stopped at a corner. A group of men and women, singing and dancing, was approaching from the opposite direction, led by a band of musicians—cymbal, flute and lyre players. At the rear a bride and a bridegroom on horseback, two flaring torches on each side, were coming slowly. They were returning from the church after the wedding ceremony. Even the horses seemed to participate in the general hilarity with their slow, graceful steps. The flute and the cymbals stopped; the lyre started a pleasing note, the song of which was most familiar to all:

« Հեծաւ արի արքայն Արտաշէս ի սեւան զեղեցիկ .
 Եւ հանեալ զոսկէօղ շիկափող պարանն ,
 Եւ անցեալ որդէս զարծուի սրաթիւ ընդ գետն ,
 Եւ ձգեալ զոսկէօղ շիկափող պարանն՝
 Ընկէց ի մէջ օրիորդին Ալանաց .
 Եւ շատ ցաւեցոյց զմէջ փափուկ օրիորդին ,
 Արագ հասուցանելով ի բանակն իւր » :

“Brave King Ardashes
 Mounted his fine black charger;
 And pulled out the red-leathern cord
 With the golden ring.
 Like a swift-winged eagle
 He passed o’er the river (Kura),
 And cast the golden-ringed leathern cord

‘Round the waist of the maiden of Alans;
 Causing much pain
 To the tender waist of the maiden,
 As he carried her swiftly
 Back to his camp.”

The marchers sang together, when they stopped, a quartet
 in the rear took up the refrain:

« Տեղ ոսկի տեղայր ի փեսայութեանն Արտաշէսի ,
 Տեղայր մարդարեա ի հարսնութեանն Սաթինիկան » :

“It rained showers of gold when Ardashes
 became the bridegroom,
 It rained showers of pearls when Sathenig
 became the bride.”

As they were singing, two maidens were throwing roses and flowers on the path.

The clergymen listened to the song with an extreme gratification. They smiled as they thought how the bride and bridegroom are made king and queen over their newly established domain—the home. They continued their way.

Walking through a not-so-conspicuous street, they heard the laughter of grown-ups and the shrill voice of a child coming from a window opened on the street. They stopped under the window to listen. It seemed to them that a youngster was the center of attraction of the family; the elders were either passing some kind of short-accented word as ball players do while throwing the ball to each other, or letting out a pleasant shout indicating their happy participation in the game. Evidently they were not many; they were one of those families while not possessing great riches, were living in a perfect contentment and happiness.

The elder of the friars suggested to enter the house and participate with the families merriment. They knocked on the door and a man about 32 years of age opened it. Noticing the clergymen he bowed reverently and asked them to enter his humble abode. The friars explained that they were tired and exhausted, would appreciate greatly if given something to eat so that they may continue their journey to their destination. When they entered into the large room from which the pleasant shouting came, they noticed a chubby-faced child in the arms of the mother who was the picture of health, standing near the window, still was raising and lowering the child to the delight of both.

It was a simple room, clean, and only a large heavy carpet covering the floor. The clergymen were invited to the upper sec-

tion to sit down while the young woman went outside to prepare whatever was possible in that hour to entertain them.

“We heard the laughter and the shrill voice of the child,” said the elder, “and we thought that we wouldn’t disturb you if we asked for a little rest and a bite to eat.”

“Our door is always open to anyone who will be kind enough to give us the honor to serve him,” answered the head of the house with an air of simplicity evidencing the man’s true religion, “for God had said:

‘Be not forgetful to entertain strangers’ (Hebrews 13: 2), and again:

‘But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself’ (Leviticus 19: 34a). Many an evening I sat in front of my house waiting for a passer-by to grace our humble abode with his presence and participate in our frugal meal, but with profound disappointment. Our rustic humble home does not attract attention. We are deprived of the honor to give hospitality to strangers.”

The disguised friars listened with an admiration. It was something of a revelation that the peasant would consider not only an honor but also the duty of a Christian to have someone as a guest at their table*. Moved by curiosity to know the man’s source of wealth, the elder inquired where his vineyard was situated.

“I do not own any. In the morning I go to the field and do my work as prescribed by the overseer. With my earning of one gold

*Armenian peasants, until before the first World War, often would wait on the main road near their village to invite any Christian passer-by for supper, until darkness would compel them to give up hope for any guest for that day. “God sends the guest” they consider, which is a national proverb in the Armenian language.

pool (sovereign) a week, I pay my debt, I lend money without interest, I support my family, and give to charity as my conscience dictates.”

Both the friars were profoundly impressed by the man’s simple statement. They understood from his remarks that he was a state employee, and, as such, his earning wasn’t of such great amount to split in four ways and at the same time be anxious to entertain strangers. The statement seemed to them rather a riddle. “Pray,” said the elder friar, “we do not understand what you meant with your statement that, you pay your debt, you lend money, give to charity and support your family as well.”

“Holy Fathers,” said the man with a firm voice expressive of self-confidence, “if you will step over the other room you will see the full meaning of my statement,” and he led them into a square, undecorated room, the floor of which was covered with a heavy mat woven with rushes grown in the dense marshes of Akhoorian river, and which evidently was the sleeping head-quarter. “There you see my father and mother, to whom I pay my debt in return for their care in rearing and bringing me up.” Two very old people, hardly able to move, were huddled together at the upper end of the room. “Next to them is the elder sister of my wife, blind and bed-ridden these many years, who is the recipient of my ‘charity’; I care for her as if she were my own sister. And here are the receivers of my loan.” With the words he lifted the edge of a beautifully decorated woolen quilt under which two angelique figures were sleeping with cherubean innocence; cheeks glowing with the color of Araxesian roses and their breathing in its rhythmical gracefulness presented them two objects of admiration and adoration. The visitors could not



An Armenian Woman of Gars
Before World War No. 1.

suppress the expression of their affection; they kneeled and each pressed a kiss on the foreheads of the children—a boy of 6 and a girl of 4.

The lady had prepared the frugal dinner for the friars—bread, olives, and zahtar.* After the meal the elder friar thanked the man for his hospitality and added, “Now I am going to tell you a riddle. You have not seen me before, but in a short while you will see me 50 times.” The man looked at the speaking friar, then at the other, and finally admitted it was beyond his ability to solve that riddle. The elder friar, who was none other than King Appas, opened his bag hung on his shoulder and brought out 50 gold pools, giving them to the man. “Look at the pictures on them,” he said. The peasant looked at the gold pieces one after another; they were all of the same design; looked at the friar again and beheld the likeness of the giver to be none other than the loving King. He fell on his knees, showing his homage and appreciation for the exceptional honor of having the company of the King and his brother Prince Sempad.

King Appas reminded the man that they had to visit other families and left the puzzled man to wonder about all the incidents of the evening.

Passing through the lower part of the city, they came near a dead-end street.

All of a sudden, they heard voices of lamentation, of wailing cry. They approached the door of an old dilapidated shack. They ascertained that this was the place where the lamentation was heard. They listened in silence.

*Pulverized roasted chickpeas mixed with two kinds of spices.

“Mother,” said a few voices coming from little children, “mother, we are hungry, we are starving, you are deceiving us every day . . . particularly this time . . . it is eight days now.”

“Yes, mother, it is eight days that I haven’t eaten anything.”

“Wait a little longer, my dear children, I am cooking a delicious meal for you all.”

“Oh! How long will that take?”

“Mother,” said a faint voice, “I am fainting, I am dying.”

“Let your mother be blinded by both eyes and not see your misery, my child; we have no bread.” And her voice sank into her heaving heart.

All these heart-rending words came from inside of the shack. The elder friar, turning to his comrade, grumbled with agitated voice, “Let us enter into this cave of suffering.”

They knocked on the door. A graceful woman showed her pretty face at the window.

“Daughter,” said the friar, “pray, take us into your house, as we are weary and exhausted.”

“Saint Fathers,” answered the lovely woman, I shall admit you gladly, but . . . I am a widow . . . I am poor, without any protector . . . alas! at this hour . . . bread . . . I haven’t even a slice of bread in the house.”

“Madame, we don’t want any bread . . . if necessary we shall find some by your grace.”

Without taking her permission, they entered into the house. It was a poorly constructed shack. Not an article, not a trace of eatable could be seen, except an old pot which was boiling on the open fire, around which four youngsters, pale, emaciated, with-

out any clothes, were seated on the bare floor and watching the steam coming out of the pot.

One of the venerable visitors, unable to withhold his tears, witnessing this dreadful scene, stammered, "True, daughter, you are a poor widow living in misery."

"Oh! my Lord," she answered in a low voice and with doleful look, "I thank you for your sympathy. Pardon me if I dared to acquaint you with my pitiable situation."

"Daughter, I think," continued the friar, "our king has designated special officers to take care of the poor."

"Pshaw! Yes," answered the widow. "Yes, Saint Father, yes, but I haven't the luck to be benefited by . . . I can't . . . You are spiritual fathers to hear my confession, I shall not hide any longer as to why I am deprived from that favor. The overseer of the poor of my district, seeing my exceptional beauty, tried to dishonor my reputation . . . when he found me unyielding, he denied me any assistance . . . I prefer to starve to death with my offsprings, rather than . . . "

The modest widow could not complete her statement. She covered her eyes with her hands and began to weep in silence.

"Daughter," said the friar, taking out ten gold pieces from his purse, "live in your modesty and purity, for this reason our Heavenly Father sent us to you as your guests . . . take this little amount, my dear daughter, go and get bread and eatables."

The widow blushing accepted the sincerely tendered donation and with deep motherly emotion, rushed out of the house, to buy food for her starving children.

The speaking friar commanded his comrade to examine the contents of the boiling pot. The old clergyman examined and told with disgust what was in it. A dog's pup was cooking in the pot!

"Throw out that abhorant food," he thundered.

The widow returned. She spread the eats on a piece of old, torn mat. The friars, taking the orphans, sat down, not for themselves, but to feed the emaciated children.

The children ate as much as their little stomachs would require; satisfied and happy, they threw themselves on the bare floor and slept. Four little angels in their natural clothing presented a heart-touching scene never to be forgotten.

"Why didn't you appeal to the king?" asked the friar who was talking all this while.

"Saintly Father, I am ashamed of my poverty; how could I appear at the palace? . . . "

The clergyman took from his pocket a string of beads, pearl and diamond, each one as big as the egg of a sparrow, alternately set, with six pairs of gold cylinders, each pair after a serial of twelve, emblematic of the seventy-two especially sent out disciples* and the twelve original apostles.

"Take this, my daughter," said he to her, "take this string of beads, you can sell it for a large sum of money with which you will assure the future of them," pointing at the little innocents on the bare floor who were now presenting the picture of purity; angelic smiles playing on their cherubic faces . . .

*St. Luke 10: 1-16. On October 1, the church of Armenia celebrates in the memory of Sts. Seventy-two Apostles of Christ.

Handing the priceless jewel to the widow, he came out of the house, his brother following.

Immediately the next day, the widow, with the remaining gold pieces, bought for her children clothes, beds, bedding, filled her kitchen with all the necessary food stuffs for immediate use, and taking the priceless beads along, went to the market—that part of the business section designated particularly for the jewelers and goldsmiths.

She visited all the jewelers and appraisers; no one could conscientiously appraise the value of the beads, for each and every pearl and diamond on the string actually was worth 1000 gold pools. While she was engaged in having the value ascertained, the master craftsman, Baba-Varbed, who was as shrewd a man as he was the leading jeweler, dazzled by the beauty and worth of the beads, conceived a develish idea to secure it for himself and for his co-craftsmen. He spoke to every one of the 40 jewelers and won them over to his plan that they all should testify in open court that the string of beads belonged to him and that the widow had stolen it from him.

“And when,” said Baba, “we divide it equally among ourselves, everyone of us would gain 10,000 gold pools out of nothing.”

Baba-Varbed succeeded in his develish plan. As the widow, after her fruitless effort to have the value of her treasure established, was returning home, the master confronted her and demanded to know where she had gotten it.

The immaculate woman, without suspecting the ill design of the master-jeweler, answered: “A stranger, a kind Friar from our city, visiting my humble abode last night, presented it to me.”

“Ah! Ah! Who was that profligate Friar that could present to his sweetheart such costly beads worth tens of thousands of gold? Shut your mouth up, you scoundrel! You have stolen this from my establishment!”

Without any loss of time, he had her arrested and taken before the judge. The forty jewelers all testified upon oath that the beads were the property of Baba-Varbed, and that the immoral widow had stolen it from him. Against such overwhelming testimony, the judge couldn't do anything but apply the law in its full severity. The law, in those days, was to cut off the right hand of the thief*. The widow was punished. The justice-loving judge himself severed the woman's right hand from the elbow.

The next night the same friars again stopped at the widow's door. The wailing cry of the children, combined with the tearful lamentations of the mother, was awful to hear. No human heart could endure against such bemoaning and bewailing. Without losing a moment the friars entered the house.

Seeing the two clergymen, the woman became more vociferous, hysterical. “Oh! Let your home be ruined, unworthy ministers,” burst out the widow, cursing them. “Let the road you tread upon be darkened . . . let your sun be as dark as night, your eye-sight be lost forever, you, who are the cause of my misfortune . . . see, they cut off my hand.”

She was roving furiously in the room, with tears streaming from her eyes. She was looking at her severed hand which was placed on the newly bought shelf, and like a pilgrim near a sacred object, would stand and stare at it unconsolately.

*On the city wall of Amida, near the northern gate or Mountain Door, there is a design in high relief, of a hand with an egg in the palm; the punishment for stealing the egg.

“What has happened, daughter?” asked the giver of the beads, struggling to hold his tears.

“What do you think has happened? You destroyed the nest of my offsprings; how can I feed them . . . Oh! they severed my hand . . . my hand; they branded me a thief, a harlot.”

After quieting down a little, the woman told her gruesome story in detail. The elder friar tried to console her, and, handing her a letter, said in a fatherly voice, “. . . My daughter, take this written paper; tomorrow you appeal to the king taking along your severed hand. You show this letter to his bodyguard, the surrounding soldiers will make way for you. Go unafraid to King Appas, and hand it to him in silence. You will see there myself and my comrade. Be careful that you don’t know us.”

Indeed, the following day, although not the day designated for audience, already the people in great number had assembled within the enclosure of the palace. “What is going on?” questioned the passers-by. “Why our brave monarch is holding an audience today?”

In a semi-circle, thirty-six ebony chairs were lined around the ivory throne which, placed on the elevated granite pedestal, and which, with its myriads of diamonds, rubies and other precious stones, dazzling like an illuminated altar, was creating an inspiring admiration in the hearts of all the subjects. Shortly, the king came down, wearing his robe of state,—a long gown of pure silk in bright scarlet with high collar of blue silk fastened in front of the neck. Golden embroidered designs, mysterious symbols of his ancestors, were lined in front of both edges of the robe, while two winged eagles, emblem of the Pakradooni dynasty, one on each side facing each other, a diamond in each of the eyes, were boldly embroidered in gold on the blue collar

under the chin. The golden buckles were in the shape of a cross, emphasizing the sacerdotal significance of Armenian kingship, underneath which two lions sat upright, faces outside, also embroidered in gold. His left hand rested on the hilt of the jeweled sword girt to his left side under the robe; he held in his right hand the dynasty's scepter—one-piece, translucent, finely engraved, purely scented amber—emblematic of Pakradooni power and justice.

High statured Appas sat on his throne. Four knights held a blue silk canopy over him emblematic of his temporal power. The 36 princes likewise occupied their thrones after kneeling in turn to majestic Appas. The soldiers and bodyguards formed a semi-circle around them; the big, curved copper trumpet sounded; the silver fifes rang out an enchanting music.

King Appas stood up. With the golden diadem on his head, he resembled a demi-god. His graceful expression, affection glowing through his dark-brown eyes, his symbolical gestures in greeting his soldiers, combined with the flash and sparkling of the diamonds and many colored precious stones of his diadem upon which the diamond studded cross, dazzling with all glory, made him truly an object of worship. There was something divine in Lord Appas.

The soldiers kneeled to him as a body, at their head stood Prince Sempad. When the ceremony was over, the widow appeared, the letter and the severed arm held high with her left. As soon as she stood in front of the Prince, she recognized him. Her surprise was great, but she struggled to hold her courage not to betray him.

“Open the way for the royal letter,” commanded the general. The soldiers with reverence stepped backward, opening a way

for her to pass. Trembling, she advanced toward the throne, kissed the king's hand and placed the arm and the letter on the tray held by a crimson-uniformed knight.

"Bring them to me!" commanded the king after glancing at the writing. "Bring over the jeweler Baba and all his co-craftsmen witnesses." Sooner than it takes to relate, the king's command was carried out. The jewelers lined up in front of just Appas.

One by one, he examined them. With the same declaration, Baba tried to deceive the king; with the same statements, all the jewelers tried to back up their master. However, King Appas, taking the beads from the usurper, called on all goldsmiths in the audience to identify the six pairs of gold cylinders, as to who is the maker of them and for whom they were made. An old man finally approached, with trembling hand he took the string, looked at the gold cylinders, examined them carefully, and turning to the king, said with a low, yet clear voice . . . "Your Majesty, this string of beads, my master 60 years ago, made for your grandfather. Therefore this treasure is my lord's."

"Therefore, is this mine . . . ?"

"Yes, my most venerated lord, it is your ornament."

The king showed it to the elders of his court and to his questioning, all attested the old man's statement. He then turned to the widow, commanding her to tell everything without fear. And she complied with the command, telling with full detail her heart-rending story.

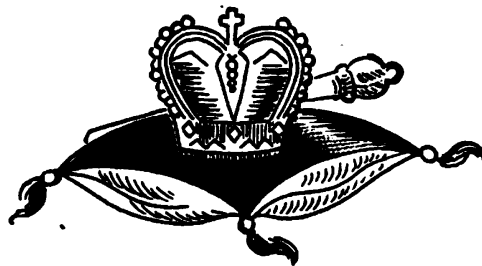
"Executioners!" thundered the voice of King-justice. "Crush without delay, the heads of Baba and his 40 false witnesses in the mortar, and as to the overseer of the poor of widow's neighborhood, behead him in public!"

With all its gruesome cruelty, the sentence of death against all the culprits was carried out with full exactness and without delay.

The audience was ended. King Appas's temporal authority was concluded when, in his splendor, he took off his crown and with the scepter, placed them on the dais. He stepped down from the pedestal, went near the widow, placed the severed arm to her elbow. Princes, generals, and soldiers fell on their knees, prostrated in piety, praying. The people stood spellbound. He lifted his tearful eyes to heaven imploring with trembling voice . . . "Our Lord, Creator of Heaven and earth, God of our ancestors—of Gregory, of Nerses, of Sahag, Thou mayest heal the arm of this innocent soul."

To the astonishment of the multitude, she was healed in this way, the story of which Armenian peasants cannot forget to tell their children from generation to generation.

The king adopted the widow's orphans and made them to abide in his palace.



An Historical Sketch of Gars



ARS, (Kars in Fr.), a fortified city in Vanant County of Ararat. The founder and the period in which it was built is not known. It is situated on the Western bank of Akhoorian river which embraces the city from three sides, like an elbow. On the fourth side it is protected with walls and towers. In Armenian history first mention is made of the city in the middle of the 9th century, when King Ashod, of Pakradoony dynasty, stayed in Gars for some time.

Appas I, succeeded his father in 905. He reigned forty-five years. Among his buildings the most conspicuous is the imposing church of Sts. Apostles, the foundation laid in 930, completed in 942, which after more than a thousand years is still standing, although during that period the Seljug Turks converted it to a mosque. But when the city was taken by the Russians in the war of 1877-1878, the church was restored again to a Christian place of worship. It has a beautiful appearance. On the outside octangular, round; the inside four-winged; the high, sharp-pointed dome rises on the eight walls without pillars, divided into twelve openings (faces) the pictures of twelve apostles depicted on them. It was on account of this church that Appas did commit an only crime — if crime it could be called.



Gars — The Bridge and the Sts. Apostles Church
Photograph taken in 1900.

On the completion of the edifice, the king of a neighboring nation, Apkhazes, the fanatic Teutass, sends his ambassador to warn Appas not to dedicate the church until he brings over his clergymen to bless the church according to Chalcedonic ritual*. Appas could not stand for such an insult. With his valiant warriors he attacked King Teutass's army which had camped on the bank of Goor (Kura) river. His unexpected attack threw the Apkhazes into disorder. After dispersing them he arrested the king and brought him over to show him the beauty of the church, saying: "See well, for you are not going to see it again," and blinding him of both eyes, sent him back after receiving a handsome price for his liberation.

Like many other Armenian cities, Gars did not enjoy a tranquil period very long. In 1053 Seljug Turk marauders attacked the city during the Christmas eve celebration. They plundered the city after massacring the people. They liked this easy victory and the taste of loot gave them an incentive to attack the city a second time in the following year under the leadership of Sultan Dooghriil. But this time the Armenians were not unprepared; they attacked the invaders and caused havoc among them. Unfortunately, however, their enthusiasm carried them too far into the enemy's line; thirty of the Armenian nobles were killed and brave Tatool, "a man with dauntless breast and lover of war" was taken prisoner. When he was brought in the presence of the Sultan, this latter was astonished by the appearance and fearless attitude of Tatool, and promised him his freedom if the wounded son of the sultan's general, Arsuran, became well: —

*Chalcedonic ritual, according to the fourth Ecumenical Council held in the city of Chalcedon A.D. 451. This Council condemned Euthichianism and affirmed the union in Christ of two distinct natures in one person, which doctrine the Armenian Church does not accept, and in turn she condemns the Chalcedonian Council.



Brave Tatool in the presence of Dooghril

“If he is struck by the blow of my sword, he will not live; if by another, that I do not know,” answered Tatool. It proved fatal; the young man died of his wounds, and Tatool was condemned to death. But Dooghril severed Tatool’s right arm and sent it to Arsuran to console him, with the message that “his son did not die from an unworthy arm”.

In the 19th century the Russians had attacked and captured the city four times, and finally after the war of 1877-1878, it became part of the Russian empire. After the World War I, the Turks regained the city once more and beautiful Gars became a Turkish city. And the fate of Sts. Apostles church . . . ?

* * *

“At the historic meeting of the Big Three at Potsdam the Soviet-Turkish issue will be high on the agenda. . . . In the name of the Soviet autonomous Armenian Republic, Moscow is going to claim the once Armenian provinces of Gars and Ardahan.”

News item.— July 22, '45.

But it has remained a high secret if any understanding has taken place among the Big Three. Meanwhile the Turkish government at Ankara is busy to create a sympathetic atmosphere in English speaking countries — England and America — in favor of their cause, which, no matter how cleverly and cunningly put, has not any justifiable value. Because during the World War II, the Turks played the shrewd game of neutrality and gained materially and financially from both the Nazis and the Allies, to use in either side of victory for their prestige, they have emboldened even to talk of “going to war, however hopeless such a war might be, rather than yield before the threat of force”.

But who has threatened them? Is their guilty conscience creating a storm in their skulls? According to the most reliable sources, Russia never presented any note making such demands. It was in March, 1945, that Russia announced, in conformity of the existing treaty, that she desired a new treaty with Turkey, more in keeping with “present conditions” to be negotiated in November, and incidently, there appeared in the official Soviet newspaper that Russia will ask the return of Gars and Ardahan, an area strategically as important to Russia as they are geographically inseparable from Armenia. To this was also added the necessity of changing the guardianship of the Dardanelles, Russia's only door into the Mediterranean.

It was evident, that neither of these subjects was brought up at the Teheran or Yalta conference. If they were brought up, even casually, there has not been any mention to that effect in any of the official announcements. We may take it for granted that the question of Russia's relation with her border countries is left alone as long as the most thorny question, that of Poland, was settled according to the best interests of all concerned. We may rest assured, therefore, that Russia will settle her accounts, old and new, with Turkey, to the best interests of all concerned.

But here in America, the public opinion seems to be favoring the present situation to remain unaltered, unchanged. However, justice demands that the case of Armenia and Armenians should be stated, clearly and concisely, possibly for the last time, in this hour of grave decision.

1895 — 1915 — 1945. Three memorable years in the life of the Armenian nation! The first was the climax of the infamous Treaty of Berlin of 1878 which Disraeli and Bismarck, leading statesmen of England and Germany respectively, forced upon Russia and Turkey, with its Article 61, nulifying the Treaty of San Stefano which Russia had concluded with Turkey after utterly destroying the Turkish armies. Instead of Russia, six great powers took upon themselves to protect the Armenians in Turkey. But, jealousy, rivalry, and commercial consideration among the six great powers made the Article 61 of the Berlin Treaty a dead letter at its beginning. More than that: the Turkish rulers realized the joke in such a policy, and whether encouraged officially or not, they carried on the open policy of the extermination of Armenians. After a local massacre in the summer of 1894 at Sassoon, the following year they ordered a general massacre in the six villayets (states) where Armenians were inhabited in great numbers. Upwards of 300,000 souls,

men, women, children, were killed or died as the result of such a horror. This was in September-October of 1895, seventeen years after the signing of the Berlin Treaty!

The Great Powers were still inactive. Nay, one of them, Germany, through its ruler, backed the bloody policy of the Sultan. Kaiser Wilhelm II paid a kingly visit to Sultan Hamid II three years later, then went to Damascus to kiss the grave of a renowned sheikh and declare himself the protector of Islam . . .

England satisfied herself with protests and mass meetings to denounce the massacre and term the Sultan as "the great assassin". And that was all!

Came the World War, August, 1914. Turkey proved their loyalty to Germany siding with her by attacking Russia without official declaration of war. In the spring of 1915, they began the annihilation of the entire Armenian nation within the Empire. Massacre and deportation were carried on in perfect planning. The gruesome details of this unheard of (at that time) barbaric policy carried on by a well organized government against its defenseless subjects, is too long to describe here. The reader is referred to "The Treatment of Armenians," a documented report of 684 pages prepared by the late Viscount Bryce, published in London, 1916. Even that will not be necessary. In the great year of our civilization, 1945, the newspapers have been full with blood curdling details of the crimes committed by the Nazis and Japanese, during the long years of World War II, on their victims who were composed of Jews, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Poles, Dutch, Belgians, Norwegians, Chinese, and . . . Americans. For the stupid policy of Berlin, in 1878, all paid the price in blood and misery, in anguish and affliction. The blood of Armenians drenched the desert of Mesopotamia, the blood of other victims drenched the territories of Europe!

And America? With her lofty ideals, and true humanitarian considerations which made her a force far more powerful than all the great powers put together, became adamant against Armenia's plea, and on the 1st of June, 1920, the U. S. Senate, by a vote of 52 against 23, declined to accept the mandate over Armenia. Isolationism had triumphed a second time!

Meanwhile, Armenia, that part of the country which was under Russia, was passing through a struggle of life and death. Turkey had attacked her from the west, and Russia, unable to assist the small nations on account of her internal difficulties due to the revolution, Armenia was left to her fate. Once more the Turks were victorious and snatched away the two provinces, Gars and Ardahan.

Now the time has arrived for final accounting . . .

As Gars and Ardahan long before the appearance of "this conglomerate mass of incarnate fiends" (designation of late Senator William Borah), were part of ancient Armenia, naturally they must be returned to that country. Justice demands it; Armenia's unquestionable right claim it.

But why is it when in this period of re-adjustment every nation is clamoring for the land of its ancestors, the Turks are keeping a damaging silence and do not claim their fatherland? If only they claimed theirs, no doubt every member of the United Nations will render all assistance to fulfill their national aspiration. No one will object to that kind of settlement; no one will cast an opposition vote against it. Yes, it will win by a unanimous consent — back to their fatherland, to the open plains of **Turkestan**, to the vast plateau of **Pamir**, to the unchallenged **Gobi Cholu** of Mongolia, to the **Turklerin Anayurdu**, whence they issued forth.

Their first appearance in history dates from A.D. 1227.

For hundreds of years they advanced toward western countries; they conquered with the sword, nation after nation, until they reached the gates of Vienna. There the tide began to turn. Slowly the nations liberated themselves and the countries regained their independence. The last of these was Bulgaria. But after the first World War, Arabia, Syria, and Palestine were also liberated and the Turks were confined only in Anatolia — ancient **Armenia Minor** and **Cilicia**. Here, 10,000,000 of them, underwent a new life: they discarded their Sultan who was the representative of their prophet; they adopted monogamy; replaced the Arabic alphabet with that of the Latin; in general, they Europeanized themselves in order to make the civilized mankind to forgive them the barbarity they committed over the Armenians. It seems that they have succeeded. When at present the victorious Allies are trying the war criminals of Germany and Japan, no one is questioning the criminals of the first World War.

But the verdict of history, modern history at that, is unequivocally given to a candid world. No matter in what part of the world, justice must prevail, and common sense must triumph. Even at this late date a decent opinion of mankind demands that the wrongs perpetrated against the Armenians be righted, and the Armenian question settled once and for all!

* * *

**"Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all."**

DISTINGUISHED ARMENIAN GENERALS



GEN. LORIS MELIKOFF
Conqueror of Gars, in the War of 1877-78



GEN. HAGOP ALKHAZIAN
Great Strategist in the War of 1877-78



GEN. ARSHAG DER LUKASSIAN

Whose Brilliant Victories in the War of 1877-78
won him the title of "The Second Suvoroff".



GEN. OHANNESS BAGRAMIAN

Commander of the First Baltic Army, World War II
One of the 50 Armenian Generals in the Soviet Armies.

Buried Treasure



ON the 13th of October, 54 A.D., Roman Emperor Claudius died, poisoned, by the order of Agrippina, the mother of Nero and consort wife to Claudius. Nero's own father died when he was scarcely three years old. Nero, through the scheming of his mother, was presented on this date to the soldiers on guard as their new sovereign. From the steps of the palace he proceeded to the praetorian camp to receive the salutations of the troops, and thence to the senate-house, where he was promptly invested with all the honors, titles, and powers of emperor. He was 17 years old.*

Soon after the accession of Nero, Vologaeses (Vologasus), king of Parthia,** overran Armenia, drove out the ruler Rhadamistur, who was under the protection of the Romans, and set his own brother Tiridates on the throne. Orders were at once issued that Gnaeus Domitius Corbulo, the first soldier of his day be sent out to the East with full military powers. Corbulo concentrated all his available forces on the Cappadocian frontier, and after some delay in being reinforced with troops from Germany, he took the offensive and attacked Tiridates in 58. Artaxa-

*Biographical sketch on page 52.

**It corresponds to the modern Khorassan.

ta and Tigranocerta were captured, and Tigranes,* who had been brought up in Rome and was the obedient servant of the government, was installed king of Armenia. In 61 Tigranes invaded Adiabene, an integral portion of the Parthian kingdom, and a conflict between Rome and Parthia seemed unavoidable. Vologaeses, however, thought it better to come to terms. It was agreed that both the Roman and Parthian troops should evacuate Armenia, that Tigranes should be dethroned and position of Tirdates recognized. The Roman government declined to accede to these arrangements, and L. Caesennius Paetus, governor of Cappadocia, was ordered to settle the question by bringing Armenia under direct Roman administration. The protection of Syria in the meantime claimed all Corbulo's attention. Paetus, a weak and incapable man, suffered a severe defeat at Rhandea (62), where he was surrounded and forced to capitulate and to evacuate Armenia. This caused an additional depression in Rome after the "British disaster"; an insurgent populace of Iceni (Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire) had sacked the Roman colony of Colchester and cut the ninth legion to pieces; this latter was followed in A.D. 63 by the partial destruction of Pompeii by an earthquake, and a year later by the great fire in Rome, the night of the 18th of July, 64.

But the situation in Armenia had forced the authorities in Rome to entrust the command of the troops again to Corbulo. In 63, with a strong army, he crossed the Euphrates, but Tirdates declined to give battle and concluded peace. At Rhandea Tiridates laid down his diadem at the foot of the emperor's statue, promising not to resume it until he received it from the hand of Nero himself in Rome. In 67 disturbances broke out in Judea, but Nero jealous of Corbulo's success and popularity,

*The third.

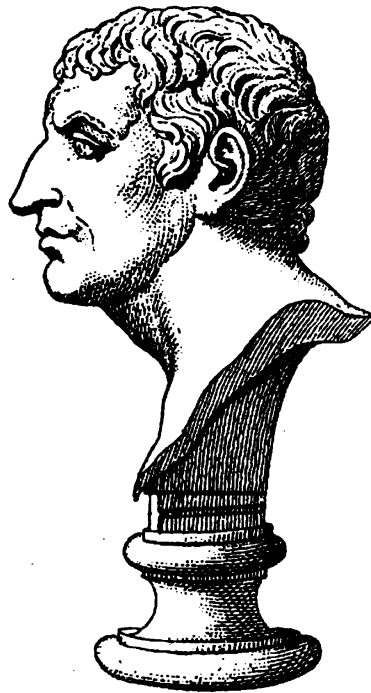
ordered Vespasian to take command of the forces and summoned Corbulo to attend upon him in Greece.

Corbulo had camped on the flat table-land west of Amida enjoying the fruits of his victory when he received the summons. His legions were most happy. He had divided generously among his soldiers the rich booty gotten from Parthia. He himself was well supplied with gold while in Cappadocia; this was increased greatly when he captured Tigranocerta and Artaxata. His wealth had reached a fabulous proportion.

Before his departure, however, in order not to enrich his enemies, Corbulo buried the surplus of the gold coins in the ground, two hundred paces south-west, to the upper spring near which his tent was pitched, approximately a mile and a half westward from the city of Amida.

On his arrival at Cenchreae, the port of Corinth, messengers from Nero met Corbulo and ordered him to commit suicide. Without hesitation, he obeyed, exclaiming, "Rightly served." Whether he had given any ground for suspicion is unknown; but there is no doubt, so great was his popularity with the soldiers and such the hatred for Nero, that he could easily have seized the throne. His legions were mighty, his name still mightier. But the fear and jealousy of the wretched Nero could be only abated through the elimination of his formidable pro-consul. Corbulo wrote an account of his Asiatic experiences, which is lost, with it was also lost the chart for the location of his buried gold.

* * *



Gnaeus Domitius Corbulo

In the course of centuries that intervened between Corbulo's departure from Armenia and the incident I am going to relate, a small village was established about a half-hour's walking distance west of Amida, modern Diarbekir, near two sparkling springs. The village is named **Al-i-poonar**, meaning "Excellent spring" if "Al" is pronounced resonantly; or "A'li's spring" if pronounced low **a**. A'li is the fourth **Caliph**, successor to Muhammad, 600-661, and venerated by Persians—Iranians—as second to the prophet. The Persians, and Kezelbashs too, visit here as

pilgrims to take home with them from this water which, they believe, A'li miraculously has caused to issue forth from its spring. This particular spring is protected by a carefully built square enclosure, and the water through aquaducts, partly open, partly underground, finds its way into the large pool of Amida's Grand Mosque (Muhammadan place of worship).

There is still another meaning of this name if pronounced high a with double "l", **Alli Poonar** in which case it means "Fifty springs". As there is only one village by this name in the entire Ottoman Empire, now the Republic of Turkey, no matter how the name is pronounced it always indicates the same one.

There is no record of the date of establishment of this village. It is inhabited regularly by equal numbers of Kurdish and Christian families, from 15 to 20 families each according to fluctuating rate of birth, death and migration. The Kurds are of one faith—Muhammadan; the Christians belong to two national groups; the smaller is of Chaldean origin, while the larger group is Armenian.

The Armenians built there a medium sized shurch in the middle of 19th century to accommodate the pilgrims coming from Amida. The number of the pilgrims on Easter time increases to more than 25 families who stay here until the end of summer, to escape the excessive heat of the city. The church is of black stone, square and flat roofed. It is surrounded by a stone wall enveloping within enough number of single rooms for the use of the pilgrims. The church is dedicated to Mother Mary and is named Soorp Asdwadzadzin—Saint Mother of God.

In the summer of 1894, on one hot day of July, two Kurds were digging the ground, about seven feet from the rear wall of the Soorp Asdwadzadzin church, to build a house for their own

use. Hardly had they dug two feet deep in the sun-hardened earth when the pickax of one strikes a hard object—a beautifully decorated Etruscan jar, and lo! glittering gold pieces are spread before their eyes. The gaudy broken parts of the jar and the brilliant gold pieces, shining in the bright sun, filled these simple children of nature with amazement and they begin to call out to their kinsfolk at the top of their voices: “Ha, voren, zer! Ha, voren, zer!” (Come over, gold; come over, gold!) All those in the village rush to see the gold. Every one is spell-bound upon seeing such an enormous amount of gold, which they had heard of only in the **hekiats** of Haroun-al-Raschid.*

One of them, a servant to the **Kahiay**, the chief of the village, taking one of the coins runs to show it to his master who, upon hearing that a buried treasure has been found, and seeing the brilliant gold coin the servant has, hurries to the treasure ground.

For a moment he is speechless with amazement. Finally, overcoming his astonishment he orders that no one should touch them until he notifies the city officials. When these latter arrive an hour later, four gendarms and a corporal, they collect the gold coins and with the smashed jar they bring them to the governor of Amida. There were two thousand pieces, all of the same kind and quality. One of them was sent to my cousin, goldsmith Thomas Zakarian, to test the refined quality of the gold. His statement was: “It is far greater in quality than the English pounds in circulation”, at that time.

*Arabian Nights Stories.



The servant shows the gold piece to the Kahiay.

The governor sent the find to Constantinople, to high authorities, while Armenians were lamenting silently as to why they couldn't have built the wall around the church of Soorp Asdwadzadzin seven feet further out . . .

* * *

In the time of Tamerlane's war against the Turks, 1402, near the city of Sebasteia (Sivas) a soldier of his found buried a great pot of gold, which he brought to Tamerlane, who asked him if it had his father's stamp upon it. But when he saw that it had the stamp of the Romans, he would not own, nor meddle with it.

The irony of fate! Romans looted Asian cities and buried the gold in the ground, the Mongols sacked the cities and disdained the gold found in the ground!





The Roman Gold Coin

Sestertius of Nero. Head of Nero laureate; his name and title. Reverse: Bird's eye view of the harbor of Ostia with its crescent-shaped pier and crescent-shaped row of breakwaters. Inside seven ships of various form and size, a colossal statue and a statue or personification of Neptune.

Inscription: 'Por(tus) Ost(iensis) Augusti. A. D. 64-66'.

From the time of Sulla (138-78 B. C.) the Roman state began to coin in gold, following the example of Hellenistic kings. With Caesar and Augustus this coinage became regular. The weight of the gold coins was fixed by Caesar at 1/40 of the pound (a Greek stater); this weight was reduced by Augustus to 1/42 of a pound, by Nero to 1/45; so it remained until Caracalla when a new reduction to 1/50 took place.

* * *

Nero Claudius Caesar Drusus Germanicus: 37-68 A. D.

The most infamous of the Roman emperors, was born in 37 A. D. He caused his own mother to be assassinated, and deluged Rome with the blood of her best citizens. He put his wife to death, and persecuted the Christians. His cruelties were accompanied with a spirit of disgusting levity and licentiousness. He caused Rome to be set on fire so that after her ruin he could build with more grandure. While the city was burning he looked on the scene from a high tower, where he amused himself by singing to his lyre. He threw the blame on Christians, to punish whom he held chariot races in his garden by night, the torches being Christian martyrs, whose clothes were smeared with pitch and set on fire. He was dethroned and died a suicide in 68.

*A history of the ancient world. Vol. II. Translated from the Russian. Oxford, at the Clarendon Press.

The Bathing in Blood



IN the latter part of the fourteenth century all Asia Minor, as the desert by a sandstorm, was stirred by a Turkish invasion. The terrorizing name of Timure-i-Leng*, (Tamerlane, as it is commonly called by the historians) was hovering over this most unfortunate people of the world, who knew there was no force on earth to resist the advancing armies of this human vampire, which, like the swarm of locusts in a wheat field, would wipe out the entire population.

Timure-i-Leng was moving forward. The story of Kelleh Minar (the skull tower), coupled with the terrific name of its creator, was preceeding him. At the gate of the city of Isfahan, Iran (Persia), he had built that tower with 70,000 human heads, to deter other communities from resisting his armies.

Such a relentless wolf-in-human-form was he, even toward his co-religionists, his brethren in Islam. He was born to cut down, with his merciless sword, innocent human souls; to cover territories with innumerable human corpses; to irrigate the earth with streams of human blood. He was death personified, sowing the seeds of death everywhere.

* * *

*He was lame and supplied with an iron leg; hence the name timure-iron, and leng-leg.

On a mid-summer night, in the year of our Lord 1402, a man was plodding along toward the hedged section in the field of Sebasteia, (modern Sivas), Asia Minor. The gloomy moonlight hardly distinguished the fierce, ferocious countenance of the man from that of an African beast. His flashing eyes, like a leopard's fixed on its victim, were gazing joyfully and revealing an inward savage desire soon to be satiated.

He proceeded slowly. Once he turned and cast a proud look around. The burning villages in the distance pictured a brilliant pathetic panorama. The thick column of the smoke from the city was arising mountain-like as an immense veil to keep the eternal watcher of the night from witnessing the atrocious scenes.

About one hour's distance towards the south there stood a little village with its stately church dedicated to Soorp Hagop (St. Jacob), the shrine of pilgrimage for the Armenians of Sebasteia. He wanted to finish the day's work in obliterating this village also, but before he could carry his hellish plan to completion he notices that evening is closing in, and an early darkness is approaching fast. "Boo Kaldeh" (this was left), he remarks to his officers, leaving the devastation for the following day. He pointed to it in the darkness with the fore-finger of his right hand as if to cast his curse upon it, and who knows what design passed through this two-legged wild animal's demoniac brains.

Until this day that village's name is known as **Kaldeh**.

His army, the camp winding over the lee, like a dragon guarding hell, was resting after a day's bloody revelry. He, too, was tired; but before retirement he had to complete his solemn ceremony. An inscrutable smile was on his lips. He continued his way toward his goal.

Near a turning thorny hedge he stopped. In front of him lay a ditch full with a kind of extraordinary scarlet liquid, which, reflecting the pale, gloomy moonlight, filled his heart with an indescribable joy. A stone's throw further a huge heap of little human bodies, forming a veritable hill, removed the last remnant of doubt in his mind. He leaned on his lame right leg. Passing the fingers of his right hand through his thick long beard, comb-like, he began to recollect the events of that happy day: in the morning he had listened joyously to the piercing shrieks of thousands and thousands of captives, who, regardless of age or sex, had been spread on the field and rolled under the hoofs of his racing devilish horsemen: in the afternoon he had personally directed the burial alive of 4000 defenseless creatures who happened to be the unfortunate inhabitants of Sebasteia: after sun set he gathered his Tartar Chiefs to culminate the enjoyment in a banquet attended by nude females chosen from the harem of his distinguished Othman prisoner—Sultan Bayazid. He pictured these events once more in his vision. He felt once more the felicity of his victory. He was ecstatic over his conquest. And now he had come to gratify his sublime desire—bathing in young Christian blood . . .

Loyal servants had scrupulously fulfilled his command preparing the pool and filling it with the blood of 200 male Christian children under two years of age.

He undressed himself. Once more he looked around to assure himself that no one else was about to share the sacred pleasure. And after a few formal religious gesticulations he plunged into the pool.

For a moment he stood in it motionless. Then he began to sink and rise and rise and sink as deep as to his shoulders. He rubbed his chest with both hands full of blood. He lowered his

beard and felt the human liquid with his chin moving slowly from one side to another.

He stood up straight. The scarlet liquid was condensing and sticking to his skin. A wild glare glazed his eyes. He sighed deeply and murmured: "Allah-ou-Akbar", turning his face toward Mecca. His quenchless thirst for blood was satisfied.

* * *

The aftermath. In March 1405, while on his way to crush China, he fell sick and died at the age of seventy. He was buried in his capital—Samarkand.

The hand of vengeance. In the year of our Lord 1925, the Associated Press message was printed in American papers:

"Poverty encircles Tamerlane's tomb. Conqueror's capital Samarkand, decays and loses romance. The city's 'ninety and nine' mosques are abandoned and dilapidated."

The vision of a patriot. In the field of Sebasteia, near a turning thorny hedge, two hundred rose bushes are blooming perpetually with a beauty and fragrance incomparable anywhere.



Shamshi Land

"And it came to pass, as he (Sennacherib, King of Assyria), was worshiping in the house of Nisroch, his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezar, his sons, smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia." (681 B. C.) II Kings 19: 37; Isiah 37: 38.

AN historical incident impels the writer to start this narrative with a quotation from the Holy Bible. This incident is preserved among the traditions of the people inhabiting the lowland of the Tigris River, State of Aghtznik, Armenia, near the boundary line of Assyria (Mesopotamia). Members of leading families, princes, leaders of tribes from the neighboring nations have come and settled in Armenia; even from India and far away China princes and warriors came, some with their followers, and wherever they settled they gained ample reward for their labor from the virgin fertile ground—land of Paradise. And Armenia was liberal in recognizing the high qualities of these outsiders. She created different aristocratic ranks—Nakhararutium—for each of these worthy princes. Thus:

From Parthians, Arshagooni dynasty;

From Chinians, Mamigonian Nakhararutium;

From Israilites, Pakradooni and Kentooni Nakhararutiuns;
 From Assyrians, Ardzerooni and Kenooni Nakhararutiuns;
 From Indians, a conspicuous generation of high-priests who
 were officiating in the pagan temples. King Vagharshag elevated
 them to the rank of Nakhararutiun—Vahnoonic or Vahevoonic;

From Medians,* Mooratzan Nakhararutiun which was called
 Vishabazoonk by our Koghtan minstrels.

When Adrammelech and Sharezar arrived, Armenia was governed by Sgayorti, of Haygazian dynasty, a descendant of Aram Nahabed (2000 B. C.). Sgayorti received them with a patriarchal spirit and gave them the State of Aghtznik to own and settle in it. They had a host of followers with them, all those who did not accept the rule of the unrightful prince Assortan (Esarhaddon), another son of Sennacherib but of different mother. The king was getting old and completely dominated by his younger wife, the mother of Assortan. In order to prevent the throne going to this latter, Sharezar conceives the thought of murdering his feeble father and to assure himself the kingdom of Assyria. Adrammelech becomes only an accessory to this patricidal act.



Sennacherib
 Bas-relief at Nineveh.

*The two sons of Ashtahag, 500 B. C.

Assōrtan at that time was in Babylon attending to the reconstruction of the country, improving the temples and religious institutions. The plan of assassination is carried on when the old king was worshiping his god Nisroch in the temple of Nineveh, the two sons fall upon him and smite the old man with their swords on the 20th of Tebet, 681 B. C. The loyal army proclaims Sharezar king. Assortan, on receiving the sad news of his father's assassination gathers a big army of Babylonians and marches on the patricide king. A battle takes place in the county of Khanirappad, (Melidineh of our time). In the heat of the battle Sharezar's soldiers desert him. The two brothers then decide to cross the boundary line and save themselves and all their followers by escaping into Armenia.

They established their abode on the western bank of the Tigris, near a chain of hills presenting a flat land where their number grew and they began to expand. Adrammelech with his group moved to the northern part of Aghtznik, near the State of Vaspooragan, while Sharezar moved to the mountainous section east of Amida. The former became the founder of the aristocratic Ardzerooni family, and the latter, of the heroic group of Sassoon, Kenooni family. But a few families of the original settlers remained on the small flat land.

They kept the customs of their native Assyria and remained faithful to the religion of their ancestors worshiping the sun-god Shamash. They built a temple in honor of their sun-deity, god of justice, whom they belived "just as the sun disperses darkness, so Shamash brings wrong and injustice to light." They regarded their sun-god as the one who released a sufferer from the group of the demons. The sick person appealed to Shamash for help, for he was suffering unjustly. Under the life-giving rays of the lord of the blue sky every person enjoyed health and happiness;

in the temple every Shamash worshiper received equal blessings from the supreme and righteous judge—god of truth, justice, and righteousness.

The temple was an architectural replica of the ziggurat, (stage—tower or temple—mount) of E-Babbar, the temple of Shamash, at Sippara, the ancient city on the east bank of the Euphrates, north of Babylon. The same they had in Nineveh, where religious tolerance was prevalent.

According to archeologists who excavated parts of Mesopotamia the structure of the temple was of rectangular in design, built on a raised platform which placed the foundations of the temple nearly on a level with the roofs of the surrounding houses. The raised platform measured 20 feet in height, and its four angles orientated exactly to the four cardinal points. Its facade was approached by an inclined plane on the east, and by a flight of low steps on the west; the summit, which was surrounded by a low balustrade, was paved with enormous burnt bricks. On this terrace processions at solemn festivals would have ample space to perform their evolutions. The lower story of the temple occupied a parallelogram of 198 feet in length by 173 feet in width, and about 27 feet in height. The central mass of crude brick, incased with red tiles cemented with bitumen, strengthened by buttresses—nine on the longer and six on the shorter sides projecting about a foot, which added to its architectural appearance a rather imposing value. The second story, the sanctuary, rose to the height of 31 feet, three pedestals laid on the design of a triangle marked the individual station of the high-priest, the priest, and the priestess.

The ceremonies at the temple were performed without any change from their ancestral days. The rituals, the sacrifices, and prayers were carried on with unquestionable humility. The

hymns and incantations sung by the priest and the priestess, were participated by all the devotees congregated at the temple.

The high priest performed his office with a solar precision, morning and evening. In the morning, all faces turned toward the East where Armenia's golden dawn was dispersing the purple hue to open the way for the brilliant fiery orb of the universe; the dazzling rays of early morning sun gave the sign to the high-priest to recite the solemn, enchanting incantation:

"All hail to thee, Lord of the day and of life. Glorious is thine uprising from the horizon. All the world is illumined by thy rays. Thou art the giver of life for all creatures, beasts and vegetation. Hail to thee, Lord of the day and of blue sky, when thou returnest home in the twilight in unsurpassed beauty, crowned with glory, thou almighty Lord."

After a few minutes of silence, the choir, three on each side of the altar, standing in an alternate manner, one male, one female, with harps, cymbals and flutes, two of each instrument, begin their entrancing, fascinating music. The congregation sings the appropriate hymn with a melodious harmony led by the priest and the priestess.

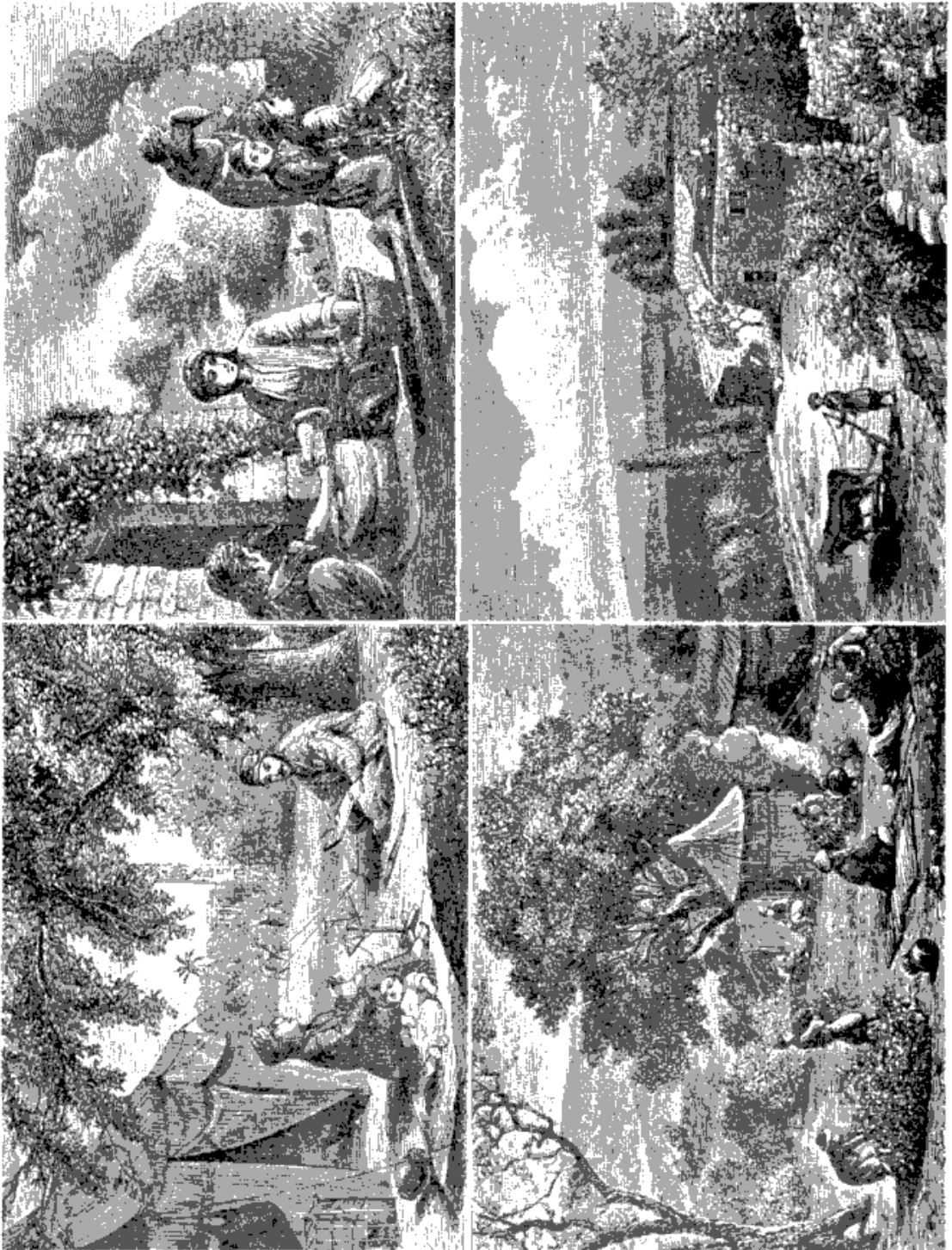
Toward evening the majestic sunset would be the sign to congregate at the temple. All faces turned toward the West the high-priest recites the solemn evening incantation:

"Shamash, the mighty, has crossed the sea; besides Shamash, who can cross it? The good god beloved, maker of things below and above, Lord of mercy, most loving.*"

Again the weird music and the enchanting songs add an indescribable rapture to these sincerely devoted sun-worshipers, pious yet latitudinarian. With the magnificent sunset the twilight hue lingers; twinkling stars appear one by one. The clear,

*In the Gilgamish epic.

Life scenes of the Shamshi People near Amida.



hazeless night is brightened by the ever bright moon. The Tigris, with its soundless wavelets, reflecting diamond-like the features of the Emperor of the night, displays a magic mirror. The Shamshi Territory is transformed into a fairy land, for night is bright and illumined by myriads of heavenly lamps. Every object is plainly visible and distinguishable. Peace and tranquility predominate over this happy people of Aghtznik. In the cool of the night the great dome of Universe manifests its innumerable brilliant stars to the wonderment of this simple people whose veneration to the heavenly bodies was exemplified through their religion.

This particular territory was greatly valued by the Romans who built the famous ten-arched stone bridge over the river, a little further south of the settlement between two opposing chains of hills. Lucullus crossed the Tigris in the spring of 69 to attack the newly-built royal city of Tigranocerta, situated on one of the affluents of that river. His failure and the open mutiny of his troops compelled him to recross the Tigris into the Mesopotamian valley. The result of these hazardous crossings was the building of the bridge which stands as solid today as when built. As to the date of the building of the city of Amida however, we have to wait for excavations to bring to light much longed for information regarding to this ancient city.

* * *

In 1638 A. D., Sultan Murad IV, of Turkey, was returning from his victorious capture of the city of Baghdad. After an obstinate resistance the Persian defenders of that city were forced to surrender to the Sultan who, with an army of 300,000 put an end to the Persian rule in that part of Turkey. In order to make his victory complete, in defiance of the terms of capitulation, most of the inhabitants of Baghdad were massacred by the Sultan's soldiers.



Roman Army crossing the Tigris to attack Tigranocerta

On the way back to his capital Sultan Murad camped in the middle of August, south of the city of Amida, west of the Tigris, near the chain of hills known today as Chekhen Dash*. The report was brought to him that a strange group of people near this camp were worshipping the sun in a roofless, wall-less, open-air temple. Anxious to get first-hand information the Sultan, disguised as an old dervish, went among this strange people who were the remnants of the Shamash worshipers.

He studies their way of life, their habits, and found them to be a simple community of about 200 families, all associating with one another with an exceptionally endogamous tribal manner. All, apparently, were happy. Not a single grudge, nor a complaint did he hear while going among them. At the end, he notices a young man sitting under a tree, sad and melancholy looking, as if worrying about something which would decide his very existence. Sultan Murad goes near the lad and in a fatherly tone, characteristic to all dervishes, asks him why he is so sad and melancholy, and if there is anything that he, the dervish, could do to help him, he would gladly do it. The young man captivated by the kind words of the stranger opens his heart to him and, like all young men, hopelessly in love, pours out his sorrows and asks the stranger if he will be kind enough to speak to his father to give him permission to marry the girl.

“Why does your father object to your getting married?” queries the dervish.

“Because”, answers the lovelorn young man, “the girl I have fallen in love with, is my sister”.

The dervish hardly believes his ears. Polygamous as the Mohammadans are, they never tolerate marriage of members

*Quarry.

within the same family, but holding his anger against such unheard of a thing, asks the young man if such a marriage is permissible in their religion.

“It is permissible”, says the youth; “even the priest is married to his own sister”.

Sultan Murad gets up, mad with anger, but assures the boy that he will speak a kind word to his father if the boy will lead him to the father’s tent.

Seeing the beggar the father of the boy invites him to sit on the cushion laid upon the velvety rug opposite the entrance to the tent. With all courtesy he assures the dervish that his presence is greatly appreciated for they seldom have any visitor from the city and that, to prove his appreciation he orders the woman folks to prepare an elaborate dinner. The dervish requests him not to go into any trouble of preparing any meal, dervishes, as a rule, are frugal in their needs, all he expects is a piece of bread and three onions, besides, the disguised Sultan adds, “I came to see you for an important matter”. After a preliminary, he asks openly; “and why do you object to the marriage of your son to his sister?”

“Dervish Baba”, the youth’s gentle and inoffensive father answers. “I have planted the tree I myself to sit in its shade. I am preparing my daughter to marry her myself.”

This was too much for Sultan Murad IV. He, a successor to the prophet, was witnessing a family condition condemned by the sacred book—Koor’an. How long was this going on in his domain? he asked himself. The blood rushed to his head. For the first time in his adventures of disguise he was sorry he did not have his sword with him to sever the head from the body of a man who nourishes such **sheytani*** thought. He could not wait

*Satanic.



The father of the girl.



The object of love.



Sultan Murad disguised as dervish.

another moment. Without a word he left the tent and hurried back to his camp.

He summons his generals and orders them to prepare 500 of the soldiers to wipe out these kafirs** from the country.

Next morning at sunrise while the happy Shamash worshipers in their temple, faces turned East, were listening to the high priest's incantation "Hail to thee, lord of the day . . ." a volley of bullets simultaneously hailed on them from the west and the Turkish soldiers with bayonets fixed stormed the temple. In five minutes all were slain—men, women, children. Of nearly 200 families not a soul was spared. Dwellings, temple, tents, everything, were destroyed and given to the flames to obliterate the abode of this happy people.

But the Christians of Amida remember them. Many a Sunday during the summer months after the noon hours the men would go outside of the city, pass through the Mardin Door* and go to the "Shamshinotz," about a half-hour's distance, mid-way the bridge and the city, to spend a pleasant few hours in the open. Tigris is running silently below. Kiosks of the wealthy are built on part of the land where the tents and the temple of Shamash worshipers once were. The fruit orchards add an alluring picture to the panorama. Young men play native games on the field, and the elders, grouped under the shade of stately mullberry trees, muse over incidents buried in the haze of the past.

They call the place Shamshinotz—Shamshi land.

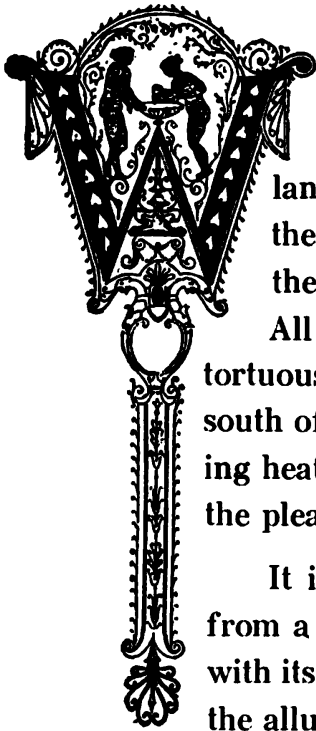
**Infidels.

*The southern gate of the city.



Fruit orchards and kiosks in the Tigris valley on the right bank of the river.
The ancient bridge is in the distance.

I and Thou



ITH its forty crystal springs running every direction, an open space of green land, large trees planted here and there, invite the nature-admirers of Amida on Sundays, in the afternoons, during the summer months. All those who are unmindful of a half hour's tortuous walk through the Mardin gate on the south of the city, on the stony road in the scorching heat of Armenia's summer, will enjoy one of the pleasant spots that nature has created.

It is named "I and Thou", taking the name from a particular section of Amida's wall which, with its massive and imposing appearance, adds to the allurement of the land. Master craftsmen will look at this wall some with awe and admiration, others with sadness and depressed hearts, for, that section of the wall stands there as a monument of a young man's genius and an old master's unyielding pride.

As unperishable as the wall itself the story has come down to us from generation to generation.

Long, long years ago when men were giant-like in strength as well as in stature, they undertook to build the wall around the city as protection against the barbarians coming from all directions. They cut huge blocks of black volcanic stone from the

quarry near by and began to build the wall. They had machinery, no doubt, to haul the big stone blocks, and lift them to their proper places, but powerful individuals were also used; these men relied on their sheer strength, lifting the blocks with their bare hands. The desire of safety and self-preservation predominated in their minds. Their only thought being the completion of the wall in the quickest possible time.

In a group of workers on the north side there was a particular one, distinguished by his strength and energy, he alone would lift the stone blocks and carry them up the scaffold as a child would lift his toys. He was admired by the rest and respected by the masters. He was a simple man, careless of his habits.

One day he notices a group of people coming out of the newly completed north gate; they carry a casket on their shoulders. He asks the men near him, "What are they carrying in that long box?" "It is a burial-case, a man is dead, and they are carrying the body to the cemetery for burial," they answer. "A man is dead? What kind of a man is he?" he wants to know. They explain to him that when life departs from the body, a man dies and he must be buried. He looks puzzled and wants to know how life departs from the body. "Every being in due time will get old and die, no one is excepted" they tell him. He drops the stone block down; "even I am going to die?" he queries. They answer "yes." "Ah! There is death in this life," murmurs the man to himself and no longer is able to lift the stone block.

But on the south side a master and his young pupil were engaged in building another section of the wall. The master would build the strong tower, the pupil would build the sun-dial. The master had his plan completely based on his experience and skill. He added a buttress at the base to strengthen the tower, and

lined the parapet with battlements, including three stages with loop-holes for observation. A perfect architectural creation for defense.

The young man however, had a new idea. He built a semi-circular wall further west from his master's tower. He carved on it mysterious emblems, and above the parapet raised twelve window-like openings, six above the others in an alternating style that the sun light would pass into each window on each hour. A truly scientific creation to marvel at.

On completion of the tower the master asks his pupil to visit the tower; he expresses his admiration to his master, and in turn, the pupil invites the master to visit his sun dial. The master is awe-stricken at the sight of such a marvel. He questions the pupil about the principles and theory of the sun's movement and finds that his pupil is far advanced in knowledge, skill, and construction, alongside of whom he is dwarfed to an insignificant plain builder. He cannot endure such humiliation—his pupil has excelled him! His oriental pride overwhelms him, and, stepping into the middle window, he plunges down. The pupil is horrified. Realizing the crushing effect of the tragedy "**I and Thou**" he shouts and plunges down from the same window after his master.

Centuries have passed but that section of the wall is known by the name **I and Thou**, which name is also given to the land near by.

* * *

The Arabic inscription in the picture on the opposite page is one of half a dozen similar inscriptions, mostly repetition and praising a certain lord and master, King and Sultan. Evidently these were added during later Arab domination, as high-relief designs and emblems prove the walls to have been built in remote times.



A section of the wall of "I and Thou".

The Miraculous Sword



N the county of Doorrooperan near the village of Upper Bulanek the Khazanah Lake is the blessing of the surrounding half a dozen other villages, for its sweet and turbid water irrigates the entire section to the contentment of the villagers.

The water becomes more muddy on Fridays, and a close listener may hear thundering from the bottom of the lake, because the Braves are warring beneath for the possession of the Miraculous Sword.

Centuries ago, King Brosh was reigning peacefully over this county. He was a wise ruler who also knew the qualities of the minerals and metals found in his territory.

One day an old woman complained to him that the shepherd had destroyed her only cow. The king summons the shepherd to punish him, but he shows a round object, stone-like, to the King explaining, "when the old woman's cow became unruly, I picked up this stone from the ground and threw it at the animal, to my horror it tore through the body of the cow killing the animal instantly." The king examines the object which was an excellent piece of steel; he sends the shepherd away, pays the old woman the full price of her cow, and keeps the round solid object. He gives a small piece of it to his sword-cutler to make a scratch-awl for a sample of its use. After the tool is made the King gives him the remainder of the steel to have a sword made of it. The sword-cutler perceives the quality of the steel, he hides it and makes a sword from ordinary metal. To test it the King strikes the scratch-awl on the sword which is torn like a piece of paper.

Thus the cutler is caught in his deceit and with threat of being punished severely, he is compelled to make from the original steel King Brosh's Miraculous Sword.

The King is attached to this sword; in day time he hangs it on the wall behind his throne, at night lays it under his pillow. And all during his reign he had peace and happiness in his realm.

In his late years when King Brosh becomes old he is worrying about the sword and his three sons who may quarrel with each other for its possession after his death. They may even shed each others blood for the sake of the sword. Finally he decides to have the sword thrown into the spring near the city. He commands his oldest son to carry the sword and throw it in the spring and whatever happens as the result of his act to tell him on his return. The oldest son hides the sword, and tells his father that his command is carried on, but nothing has happened. The King gives the sword to his second son with the same instruction; this son also deceives the father in the same way. Finally he gives it to the youngest son, who following his father's advice, throws the sword into the spring, and lo! and behold! The spring swells and the water is flooding the area with such rapidity that the son on his horse back running the animal's hind legs are always in the water, until the water covers the ground forming the present Khazanah Lake. The area being about five statute miles.

The Bravest of the Braves in the depth of the lake, takes the sword and places it under his pillow; it is resting there until this day. Every Friday, however, other Braves arrive to battle for the possession of the Miraculous Sword, then, at the bottom of the lake occurs a tumultous conflict, the violence of which is heard like thundering, and the water becomes turbid and muddy.

The Beads of Semiramis



DOWN THE RAPIDS, after numerous windings the Tigris runs smoothly in front of the royal city of Assyria — splendid Nineveh. The city's magnificent palaces, glowing, glittering temples reflecting in the silvery waters of the river, vast gardens joining the suburbs and villas with the city making it appear endless, would present a scenery far more beautiful and enchanting than any thing that man had created. Its existence is estimated to be from 3000 B.C., but its inhabitants were of Semitic origin branched out from old Babylonia.

In the middle of the nineteenth century before Christ, a warrior family established its rule over the city and thus created the dynasty which gave to the world the first woman ruler — Queen Semiramis of the Assyrian Empire.

Semiramis became the Queen after the death of her husband, King Ninus. She was, naturally, of a high aspiring spirit, ambitious to excel all her predecessors in glorious achievements, building cities and palaces which would surpass in greatness and adornments any and all that have been built before. After all her works were finished, she began her career of conquest; Media, Ecbatana, and Persia in the East; Egypt, Lybia and Ethiopia in the West. In Lybia she went to the Temple of Jupiter

Hammon, and there inquired of the Oracle how long she should live; which returned her this answer:

“That she should leave this world and afterwards be forever honored by some nations in Asia, when Ninyas, her son, should be plotting against her.”

Having settled her affairs in Egypt and Ethiopia, Semiramis returned to her country resolved to complete her long cherished plan, to establish a blood relation with the King of Armenia — Ara the Handsome, to make him king of all the Assyrian empire. She had only heard about the fame of this handsome Armenian king and was uncontrollably infatuated with and desired his company under any circumstances.

To her emissaries Ara gave a rejecting answer, by being already married to a virtuous Armenian woman named Nevart, and had a son named Gartos. In vain she sought to accomplish her design with all kinds of promises and persuasions; to all of her propositions chaste Ara gave rejecting answers, he would not, under any circumstances, exchange his loving wife and the honor of his country with any kingdom.

Incensed with anger, Semiramis resolves to avenge her wounded pride by invading, with a great army, into Armenia and to subjugate Ara with the force of arms. She led the army herself, but gave orders to her generals to capture Ara alive, as she was extremely desirous of her object.

The Armenian army could not withstand against such superior force as the Assyrians had, and Ara, remaining loyal and honorable up to the last, fell in the battle with his soldiers and died on the battlefield.



Death of Ara.

Semiramis was in hopes to restore Ara to life through the charms of sorcery. For a week the sacred dogs of her religion were licking Ara's body while sacrifices were offered to Assyrian gods. But as the body became decomposed Semiramis ordered it to be buried in a large pit and cover it in such a manner so that the burial place will not be located. Meanwhile having one of her paramours dressed and decorated like Ara, she sent word to vengeance-seeking Armenians that "she commanded her gods and they lapped the wounds of Ara and brought him to life."

She spent some time in enjoying the pure, incense-breathing air of flower-strewn fields, greatly admiring the beautiful scenery of the plains of Ararat — Arayi ard (field of Ara) as the place is named in memory of the handsome ruler of Armenia.

On the eastern shore of the Peznooniatz Sea (Lake Van) she ordered to build a city to be named after her — Shamirama-guerd.* She caused to have gardens and fruit orchards planted in and around the city, the water running through underground conduit from a distant river to irrigate them.**

On the summit of the rocky hill near the Lake she had her resplendent palace, built with numerous chambers, treasure houses, and sunken caves hewn in the solid rock, the surface of which was covered with countless cuneiform inscriptions, accounts of her accomplishments over the neighboring nations. Hardly any space was left without cuneiform writings.

After the completion of the palace she decides to “live in it during the fourth part of the year, which is the summer season, we may pass our time in enjoyment and exhilaration in this land of the Armenians; and during the remaining three seasons we shall stay in Nineveh”.

Queen Semiramis came to this city to pass the summer in its cool pleasant garden, to cure the wound of her heart after her unsuccessful love-battle with Ara. She wore her enchanting necklace of large, deep yellow, ambers which possessed the power of enticing the Armenian youth who, fascinated by her beauty and allured by her charm, would fall into her clutches to sweet forgetfulness. Armenian elders could not tolerate this licentious woman to endanger the moral of their youth; they complained to the high priest — the guardian of the sacred

*“Built by Shamiram”, as the Armenians pronounce her name; it is the city of Van of our time.

**It is called “Shamiram’s River,” and is still, after more than 2750 years indispensable for the existence of the people living in that fertile region.



Anooshavan dedicated to the Poplars of Armavir.

(At this period tree-worship must have been the national religion of Armenia. The poplars of Armavir, the capital, were celebrated for their grandure and stately appearance; priests were designated to attend to them and the heir to the kingdom was dedicated with elaborate ceremony).

poplar trees. He suspected the bewitching power of Semiramis and understood it to be her necklace of amber beads. One day the queen was bathing in the marble pool of her shady garden; her wearing apparels, ornaments, and the bewitched necklace were placed under the rose bushes; she was combing her long hair. The old priest approached silently and snatching the necklace raced towards the sea. The infuriated queen, loose-tressed, gave chase to the old priest. When she could not overtake him, in her uncontrollable rage she picked up an immense rock and

using her long hair as a sling, threw the rock at the running priest. It missed him and fell into a pit near the city of Ardamet. The old priest reached the shore and threw the necklace into the sea, relieving the country from the clutches of the lascivious queen.

The minstrels of Ardamet composed a song commemorating this event, unfortunately only one line has reached us through the father of Armenian history — Movses of Khorni:

Ուշունքն Շամիրամայ ի ծով:

Oooloonken Shamiramah ee dzov.

The beads of Semiramis (thrown) into the sea.

* * *

The historians and analysts are far from being agreed as to the end of Semiramis.

According to Movses of Khorni: after Ara's death Armenia was completely subjugated by Assyria. Semiramis designated Gartos as "prince" and changed his name to "Ara" in memory of Ara the Handsome. Gartos was 12 years old when his father died.

Gartos-Ara became famous by going to battle on the side of Semiramis against her son Ninyas, who was the youngest son of the queen. This conscienceless woman-ruler in order to assure herself an absolute ruling power over her country had all her offsprings killed, but Ninyas was saved through the efforts of some princes who took him out of the country where he grew to manhood. He gathered a large number of warriors and marched against his mother. In this battle both Semiramis and Gartos were killed.

According to Claudius Aelianus, a Greek historian: "Semiramis being assaulted by an eunuch through the treacherous contrivance of her son, remembered the former answer given her by the Oracle of the Temple of Hammon, and therefore passed the business over without punishing of him who was chiefly concerned in the plot: by surrendering the crown to him, commanded all to obey him as their lawful king, and forthwith disappeared as if she had been transmuted to the Gods, according to the words of the Oracle.

"There are some which fabulously say she was metamorphosed into a pigeon; and that she flew away with a flock of those birds that lighted upon her palace: and hence it is that the Assyrians adore a Dove, believing that Semiramis was enthroned among the Gods.

"And this was the end of Semiramis, Queen of all Asia, except India, after she had lived 62 years, and reigned 42. And these are the things which Ctesias the Cnidian report of her in history."

* * *

In the World War I, at the City of Van, Armenia, during the massacre of the Christians in 1915, a stray shell from the Turkish artillery made a hole in the rock structure in the center of the city. The hole opened the entrance to the tomb of Semiramis.

The discovery proved that Semiramis was buried in the city she built, in the land where Ara the Handsome was buried.



Pen, Trowel and the Sword



IN a picturesque land between two rivers,* near the sea, there lived a people in a period when time was not divided into fragments of hours, nor seasons were marked for any periods. The climate was the same, always warm, sometimes hot, and quite often an oppressive heat compelled them to wander forward in search of a cooler place. Their search brought them rewards; they found places with more trees and vegetation, and the abundance of the fruits gave them a feeling of independence.

But it was a revelation to them when a particular fruit was discovered as different from the rest. It was red in color, dark red, round, the centre protruding as the nipple of a mother's breast. It had tough rind and its weight bent the branch of the tree so that picking was made easier. When they cut it, hundreds of ruby-colored, small, juicy seeds, set in close together, dazzled their eyes. The juice quenched their thirst as no other fruit had given them such delight before. This was the pomegranate; destined to be immortalized on their statues and monuments; later in mythology and in Solomon's Song of Songs. Even up to the present day in Mesopotamia, Syria, and Egypt, the pomegranate is considered a holy symbol of fertility.

*Mesopotamia, the country between Euphrates and Tigris.

In their primeval simplicity they showed a certain degree of awe and veneration to the elements. The sun-light and the heat made them to look up to heaven in day time and the moonlight and the stars made them to look up to heaven at night. The sun was rising in the morning and setting in the evening with an undefinable precision. The moon shone at night with exquisite brilliancy through dry, hazeless atmosphere. Every object could be distinguished without difficulty and an agreeable coolness prevailed over the region. Because they were unable to explain this succession of lights day after day and night after night, and being overcome with an amazement beyond the grasp of their primitive minds, they stood motionless when the leader, overawed and speechless, upraised his hands as if imploring to an invisable power. The rest followed his example. In that attitude they were a collection of rigid beings. From then on they would repeat the upraising of the hands to greet the light givers in the sky every time the sun and the moon appeared. It was this feeling of awe and veneration that, ages later, manifested itself through their descendants into making a Sun-God and a Moon-God in order to worship and to offer sacrifices.

They were the remnant of the confused tongues. Still with an articulation hardly understandable to all. They wore a coarse garment, prepared by their women, the material secured from their wooly sheep. Their heads were covered with woolen, cone-shaped caps, around which they wound three or four rounds of thick, black woolen, rope-like cord. On their feet they wore pieces of sheepskin, woolen side out, tied to their ankles with a thin piece of leather strip.

Their facial characteristics signified they possessed a will power almost equal to tenacity. They were of low skull, and of



Winged being offering a branch with pomegranates;
wall panel. Alabaster.
From the palace of Asur-nasir-apal II.
(885-860 B. C.) King of Assyria, at Kalhu, modern Nimrud.

long, out-standing jaw; with prominent hooked nose; set medium stature.

Often they traveled in groups. Some carried sticks in their hands for testing the solidness of the earth to tread upon. As they traversed, one of them turned his head and, looking back, he noticed on the ground the footmarks of the men with the little holes caused by the sticks. This one had a stick himself. He began to play with his stick making more holes and adding lines, and lo! the soft ground held some kind of crude designs. He played a little longer, tried to make an impression of a man with a stick, there it was; next he tried the shape of a tree root, trunks and branches; he began to smile at his new discovery, for he hadn't done anything like it before. When he sat down he picked up some of the soft dirt and tried to shape it. Made a square block, put some lines and holes on it with his stick and left it in the sun. Soon it dried in the excessive heat of the land between two rivers, and when he lifted it up he discovered that the soft dirt was now a solid material like a piece of stone. He smiled once more. He had created something which was to keep records of his time.

Years went by. Centuries succeeded centuries. New civilizations appeared and disappeared in ever-devouring time. A few years ago the Joint Archaeological Expedition of the British Museum uncovered in Chaldea, Mesopotamia, "the museum in the compound of the great temple of the Moon God, Ningal, close to the ziggurat, or tower, of the city, and that it contained objects dating as far back as 2500 B.C., and the most precious of all, a record of clay of excavations carried out at Ur in the seventh century, B.C., with copies of early inscriptions found in

the course of the work. These copies were made 'for the admiration of the people'."



Babylonian Clay Tablets

It was here, then, the value of the primitive man's stick which became the chisel and pen during the improving periods, was recognized.

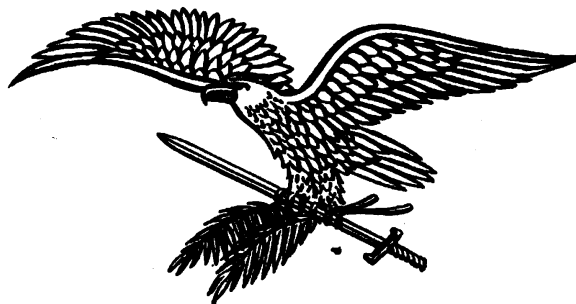
Yet, what one genius created and preserved for future generations, another, with equally creative power was doing his best for destruction. This one created first his crude, clumsy club, then the javelin, afterwards the simitar which he improved in the shape of sword. Even with the invention of gun powder the sword is recognized as an emblem of rank and authority. With his sword the destroyer laid bare populous cities, annihilated races and nations, and established his will upon those whom he spared, and governed them as he desired.

But there was another genius also creative in character, and far more speedier than the pen-man. His task was to erect, to build for protection against severe nature, against man and beast. He made the tool, a flat piece of hard metal with a handle.

With this he proceeded to raise building after building, faster than his enemy could destroy. If the enemy destroyed one, he built ten. He even built more solidly than the previous ones, always striving to outlast his enemy.

How much he succeeded, this builder-genius, is evidenced by enduring landmarks and masterpieces all over the world. His example was copied in every land. The wall of China, the stone bridges of Tigris and Tiber, yes, the pyramid in one part of the world and the Empire State Building in another, are magnificent creations resulting from the first unartistic use of the flat piece of hard metal with a handle, used by the primitive man, in the picturesque land between two rivers — Euphrates and Tigris.

With all glorious achievements of present day civilization mankind cherishes most the two simple objects — the pen and the trowel; and wherever society is established their great hope is that the sword shall not leave its sheath!



Josselin and Zilki

IN the westerly direction from the city of Aleppo the dusty road passes through undulating, gravelly, desolate country. For miles the traveler will see nothing of human interest on this barren, calcined territory save a low gently rising mound which, as a solitary guardian, keeps watch over that God-forsaken ground. There is something awful about this mound: bare of any green leafy sign, with light-gray, sandy color substance comprising its massive shape shining under ever-bright Syrian sun, will provoke the thought in the mind of the traveler as to vagueness of nature in raising the mound. As if to complete the desolation nature must have purposely kept away any birds, for no matter how the season, the temperature, or aridity may change, no feathered creature will fly towards the direction of this mound. But it must be said that a caravan coming from west upon nearing the mound they know that within two hours they will enter the city. At least the mound serves as a distance mark, being placed on a spot measuring exactly two hours distance on horse-back riding from Aleppo.

But the mound is a silent and majestic guardian of that particular ground. Before you pass, casting a disdaining glance upon it, come with me dear reader, to go near it, we shall pay our revered respect to that earthly monument, for it stands there as an eternal watch on a hallowed ground where centuries ago, a Crusader prince with his converted Muhammadan-born sweetheart were engulfed, not to be fallen into the hands of the infidels. Yes, it is a shrine for unfortunate lovers to come near by and meditate deeply upon the wonderful work of nature which is awe-creating in the hearts of all, young and old, if any trace of Divine Love is left in their hearts . . .



Starting on a Crusade.

For 459 years Christians under the rule of Muhammadans were subjected to indignities which finally brought on the great movement in the name of Christian religion. This movement is known in history as "The Crusades", for the crusaders carried the cross on their standards and wore it as a badge of distinction, to deliver the Holy Land from the Muhammadans.

There were seven principle crusades to the Holy Land, extending from 1096 to 1279. The **first crusade**, undertaken in 1096, resulted in the capture of Antioch and Jerusalem. The **second crusade** (1147) was unsuccessful, Jerusalem was lost. The **third crusade** (1189) brought about the capture of Acre. The **fourth crusade** (1202) led to the taking of Constantinople and the establishment of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. The **fifth crusade** (1217) resulted in the capture of Jerusalem the second time, but was lost again in 1244. The **sixth crusade** (1228) was unsuccessful, as was the **seventh crusade** (1248). Some authorities reckon nine crusades for the Holy cause, yet in the end, after a great waste of wealth and human lives, Jerusalem remained in the hands of the infidels.

But as a result of the crusades, civilization in Western Europe advanced enormously, culminating finally in the rule of the people over their absolute lords and nobles.



WITHIN fifteen years of the Hegira* Jerusalem fell before the arms of Omar (637), and it continued to remain in the hands of Muhammadan rulers till the end of the First Crusade (1144). For centuries, however, a lively intercourse was maintained between the Latin Church in Jerusalem, which the clemency of the Arab conquerors tolerated, and the Christians of the West. European kings in this period contributed generously to the wealth and glory of the Holy Land: the Holy City was endowed with a hospital and library by the Great Charlemagne, who was in turn acknowledged as protector of Jerusalem and owner of the church of the Sepulchre. But in 1010 the fanaticism of the caliph Hakim destroyed the church of the Sepulchre and ended the Frankish protectorate.

Forty-seven years earlier, in 970, the recovery of the territories lost to Muhammadanism in the East had been begun by

*El-Hijrah, (The Flight), Friday, the 16th of July, A. D. 622, when Muhammad threatened with death at the hands of his jealous kinfolks, left Mecca secretly, seeking refuge in Medina. This is the beginning of Islam.

Muhammad, the founder of the fourth great religion of Asia was born at Mecca about 570. His native country was a barren land, a land of dry sand, a reservoir of Semetic-speaking tribes. They were nomadic, wandering with their sheep, cattle, horses, and camels. They worshipped idols, the heavenly bodies, and had had a kind of civilization of their own.

Muhammad (this is the real pronunciation of his name) died at Medina on Monday, the 8th of June, 632 A. D.

Armenian Emperors of Byzantium, Nicephorus Phocas and his illustrious nephew and successor John Zimisce — Hovhannes Chemeshkig; they had pushed their conquests, if only for a time, as far as Antioch and Edessa, and the temporary occupation of Jerusalem is attributed to them. This recovery of the holy land was certainly the beginning of the Crusades in fact, without the much publicized theory.

Nicephorous Phocas took the field at the head of a powerful army, and recaptured Antioch from the Moslems. Although his triumph was confined to the taking of the city, it only served to create a persecution against the Christians of Palestine.

Zimisce, on his succession to the throne of the Byzantine empire, resolved to avenge the outrage inflicted upon his co-religionists. On all sides preparations were set on foot for a fresh war against the Saracens (the name designating this race from the Arabs). In Mesopotamia he defeated the Muhammadans on the banks of the Tigris, in early 975, regained possession of Amida and Martyropolis,* but these cities contained so few Christian inhabitants that he was obliged to leave the administration in the hands of Saracen Emirs,** who were charged with the collection of the tribute and taxes. He forced the caliph*** of Baghdad* to submission and to pay a tribute as well.

Zimisce then penetrated, almost without resistance, into Judea, took possession of Caesaria, re-occupied Aleppo and his native city Heiropolis; Ptolemais, Tiberias, Nazareth, and several other cities of the Holy Land were captured with his advancing forces.

*Mufarghin. **Governors. ***The title of the ruler: successor to the prophet Muhammad.

*Baghdad—founded in A.D. 762 by the caliph Mansur, Harun-al-Rashid of "Arabian Night's" fame. Baghdad was the first capital city of Islam.

The Holy Land appeared to be on the eve of being delivered entirely from the yoke of the infidels, when the emperor, on his return to Constantinople was poisoned and reached the capitol in a dying state. He expired on the 10th of January, 976.

His death at once put a stop to the execution of an enterprise of which he was the soul and the leader. The Christian nations had scarcely time to rejoice at the delivery of Jerusalem, when they learned that the Holy City had again fallen into the hands of the Muhammadans who, after the untimely death of Zimisce, had invaded Syria and Palestine. Hakim, the third of the Fatimith* caliphs, signalized his reign by all the excesses of fanaticism and outrage, culminating in the destruction of the Church of the Sepulchre. Aleppo, as well as other cities, passed to the Saracens.

In 1124 the crusading princes of Antioch, led by Baldwin II, attacked Aleppo and Damascus, although successful temporarily and extracted tribute from both cities, they could not hold them.

After the death of Baldwin II, in 1131, the struggle was continued with more or less ferocity. The Muhammadans directed their attack on Edessa which was held by Josselin I, a cousin of Baldwin II. This struggle lasted for thirteen years. During a battle Josselin the elder is killed and his son, Josselin, takes up his father's sword to defend the beautiful city of Edessa which, however, after the long years of battle is won back by the infidels and Josselin is carried to Aleppo as a prisoner, 1144.

Due to his rank of royalty, Josselin is treated more like a prince than a prisoner of war. He is placed in a private room in the citadel of Aleppo under the care of Kassim Hassan, a learned Arab guard. He is permitted to visit the city's important sections,

*Fatimith—the name of the ruling house.

always, however, with a guard. As an intelligent young prince he had studied the Arabic language which he began to improve with the assistance of his guard. Kassim Hassan recognized in his young charge a princely ruler and did every thing possible to lighten the worries of Josselin, even engaging a tutor to teach him Arabic literature. In his seclusion Josselin gradually forgets his princely station; cut off from all connections with his former associates he adjusts himself to the plain life of a civilian. Under the strict rule of Kassim Hassan he is made to weave rugs, a rug dealer, the friend of Kassim, being the master.

With sufficient knowledge of weaving he designs a rug, laboring on it many months. A fountain in the center, flowers, birds and domestic animals arranged in such an artistic way as to make it an ornament rather than a piece of household article. At the lower end, as if to put the finishing touch on this masterpiece, he included two lines of poetry, carrying the message from a young lover to his sweetheart:

الحُبُّ فِي قَلْبِي أَمَانَةٌ كَافِيَةٌ
مَلَكَتْ قَلْبِي بِرِضَائِي

**Alhoub fi kalbi amanah, Kafia,
Malakti kalbi bi ridayek—**

“Love within my heart is a sufficient trust, Kafia,
You have possessed my heart by my consent.”

Both his guard and the tutor were astonished seeing the completed 5 x 9 foot rug.

“This is worthy of our Sultan” remarked the guard, while the tutor was examining closely the Arabic writing. “Mash-Allah!”, exclaimed the tutor, “it is perfect, and I myself will pre-

sent it to Him if the prince so desires.” As Josselin had no interest in it beyond passing his time, he told the tutor to take the rug to the Sultan.

Sultan Nur-ed-Din of Aleppo on receiving the rug granted the prince full freedom to travel in the city unguarded. He placed the rug in the room of his **haremluk*** where his wives and children were delighted in seeing it, particularly, when they learned that it was made by a Christian prince. As to the poetry, only the Sultan’s daughter, Zilfi, could read and take its meaning to heart.

Zilfi was a maiden of 18 with a rare beauty of an Arab female, olive-skinned, with dark eyes, slender, she was a **huri** incarnate. Of all the 14 children, she was her father’s darling. Through her intelligence, she had become her father’s favorite, while all others recognized her as the most lovable member of the family.

Secluded in the **harem** this girl member of the ruling house of Aleppo had grown to young womanhood, innocent as a child, lovable as a budding rose. But since reading the two lines woven in the rug she was subjected to a feeling heretofore unknown to her. Often in the silent hours of the day, while other members of the family would be in the garden or strolling in the shade on the stone pavement of the court yard, Zilfi would sit on the rug and examine admiringly every detail of it. She was attached to the rug. With sweetness and sunshine around her, without and within, she would muse on it for hours, and every time thinking of the weaver who was a Christian Prince, she felt a mysterious inexplicable tie between her and him, insolubly knotted together as the different colored knots in the rug. A Muhammadan

*The womens’ section of the house.

girl of the ruling house and a Christian Prince who fought against her father's force, she felt a close association had already existed between them the nature of which her maiden inexperienced mind could not comprehend.

While she knew about the war between the two unreconciled forces, yet she was totally ignorant of its cause. Through this ignorance she was lifted to the highest plane of humans — love awakened in her heart.

A thought came to her as the consequence of this awakening. She blushed as she designed mentally to put the thought in reality. Soon she resolved to proceed with it. She began to embroider a silken scarf, and imitating the rug in natural delineation, she added the other two lines of the stanza written in the rug:

“Every shadow of my soul is yours, Kafia;
In your hands rests my destiny.”

On completion of the scarf she showed it to her attendant, lady Kassim Hassan, who had been her nurse in her younger days, and begged her to take it to the Christian Prince under her husband's care. Lady Kassim Hassan showed the scarf to her husband and together they took it to Josselin. While he was unfolding it and reading the two lines of the poetry they noticed a change on his face, the melancholy expression disappeared and with a cheerful smile he questioned them about the sender. They gave him all the information he desired and assured him of the maiden's sincerity and love toward him. Lady Kassim Hassan was particularly anxious to know if the prince intended to live in Aleppo and forget about the old country. Josselin gave her a laconic answer — as long as the Holy Land was in the hands of the Saracens he did not wish to stay in their country.



Zilfi
embroiders
the scarf

Lady Kassim Hassan brought the prince's answer to the dark-eyed maiden, who, contrary to the nurse-attendant's expectation, gave out the childish word "then I'll go with him".

The lady felt the precariousness of the answer. In love's entanglement such an answer would create many hazards to face, but when a Christian prince is involved it offers an insurmountable obstacle against which her feminine ability would be powerless. She was devoted to Zilfi, and true to oriental custom, she was duty bound to serve her to the end. What is to be done? She decides on a plan — to bring the lovers together and to persuade the prince to change his mind on returning to the land of his fathers.

The following day Zilfi, accompanied by her attendant visited the prince in the citadel. For a moment, in the presence of the dark-eyed passionate maiden Josselin forgot his sad lot being separated from his people. He opened his heart to this "infidel" girl with the ardor of a devout lover; she listened enchanted to his glowing words coming from a young prince crushed beneath the weight of circumstances. Sympathy combined with love, on the part of the girl, love combined with devotion on the part of the young prince, overcame them, and in a moment of pure, rapturous emotion an oath of eternal fidelity united these young hearts.

Josselin was wearing a square amulet hung from his left shoulder upon which a small gold cross was sewn. Zilfi asked him what that was for. He explained that it is emblematic of the Saviour and as a Christian he is duty bound to wear that sign during the struggle. "Has it the same meaning as our crescent?" asked the girl. "More!" answered Josselin; "your crescent is changeable, it changes every day in the month, while our cross is changeless, holy, and safeguards the wearer against any

danger. My maternal grandmother* gave it to me when I was seven years old, and I have worn it ever since”.

Zilfi held the amulet and reverently kissed it not for its religious quality, but because it belonged to one whom she considered an idol, a being to offer homage to. It was a moment of transformation, from a young care-free girl to an idealist, from a simple girl to an ardent lover. The innocent maiden realized that she is no longer the mistress of her heart which was beating as it had never done before. She was thinking of the square amulet with its “changeless, holy cross that safeguards the wearer”.

It was a moment of grave decision — life or death. Life and happiness if both could find attachment and love in each other; death, if parental will opposes them. Josselin instinctively held the girl's hand with the amulet and pressed a kiss on it, “let this be the seal of our love” he uttered with a voice hardly audible.

The poetical, dreamy, long moments passed while the young lovers standing there in silence, living the life of innocent idealists, when lady Kassim Hassan called Zilfi to be ready to return home.

These clandestine meetings could not be kept undetected very long. Jealous eyes of the harem were quick enough to find out the purpose of Zilfi's leaving the house every day and every time returning late. The tutor's wife had a dislike toward lady Kassim Hassan, and having heard from her husband that she brought Zilfi to the citadel almost every day, the wife accompanies her husband one day and seeing the affectionate visita-

*Josselin I married into the Roopinian house, (1098). His wife, Arda, was the beautiful daughter of the Armenian Prince Gosdantin, the older son of Roopen, the founder of the Roopinian dynasty (1080-1393) in Cilicia, the last independent Armenian kingdom.

tion of the maiden to the Prince she carries the tale to one of the Sultan's wives, who in turn notifies the Sultan.

Sultan Nur-ed-Din becomes infuriated with the information; that his favorite daughter is fallen in love with an infidel is the worst calamity could have happened; after the glories in battles he should be defeated in a silent scheming plan to snatch his favorite daughter from him, why, the thought alone would have driven him to act of desperation, he would cut, with his own simitar, into hundreds of pieces the person who dared to act in such a design. Pain and anger struggled in his heart. He could not punish lady Kassim Hassan because she was motivated by a motherly desire to please the girl; to punish the prisoner, would be an act of grave injustice, after all it was his daughter who had visited the citadel. He summoned Zilfi into his private chamber.

For once Sultan Nur-ed-Din forgot that he was addressing his favorite daughter. His religious fanaticism overcame his parental love, and began to admonish the maiden in cold, severe terms; he even threatened to exile her into the far city of Baghdad where his friend Abu-el-Malik will make her a servant in his harem.

At this threat the girl burst into crying, and throwing herself at her father's feet implored him to spare her from such a life of misery, and with childish innocence "but father, I love him so dearly," murmured she, raising her large dark eyes imploringly. The father remained silent, the sobs of his daughter only increased the pain in his heart, then in a milder tone, "I will send him to Damascus" he said and sent the girl to her room.

A week passed. The days of deep sorrow had changed Zilfi to a defiant rebel who will stop at nothing to achieve her goal. She inquired of lady Kassim Hassan about the day when the Christian Prince will be sent away. The lady reluctantly gave

her the desired information, to which Zilfi stated resolutely, "I will go with him". In vain lady Kassim Hassan tried to persuade the girl to abandon her rash plan, that she will be travelling in darkness as she does not know the destination where the prince will live. "My dearest nurse, you have taken care of me since my babyhood, therefore I will confide you my secret. The day I kissed the 'changeless cross' on his amulet I felt I was bound to him inseparably. My life belongs to him, and as he believes that cross safeguards the wearer, I trust that cross will safeguard me while I am with him. All I ask you, as a last service to take me to him on the day of his departure".

"My husband will take him out of the citadel tomorrow before sunrise and through Bab-ul-Hadid,* they will travel on the main road leading to Damascus," answered the lady, "I do not know how can you join him at that hour".

"I will leave the palace at dawn, if you stay with me tonight, you can take me to the citadel just before they start."

Lady Kassim Hassan assented. They passed a sleepless night; one with agitated mind not knowing the outcome of such an adventure, the other, with impatience to be with her Christian Prince sweetheart.

Next morning at the early dawn, two females left the palace through the rear entrance of the garden. They arrived at the citadel when the Prince was mounting his horse.

Both the guard and the Prince were astonished seeing lady Kassim Hassan and Zilfi, before they could ask them any question Zilfi said, "I am coming with you". The Prince smiled with satisfaction, Kassim Hassan was dumb-founded, the lady stood there stupified staring at her husband, in convulsive expectation for a word which will save the lives of all the four. Zilfi broke

*The Iron Gate of the city.

the silence, "you wait for me outside of the city, until the lady and I can leave the city and join you."

"We will wait for you at the 'low mound' " answered Kassim Hassan involuntarily, still not knowing what to do in this hazardous situation. If, by some chance, the guards at the gate recognized the girl leaving the city after him, sure death will be the result.

But death was already following them . . .

Enemy eyes had seen the lady and Zilfi at that early hour of the morning leaving the palace; an attendant of the harem notified the Sultan when the latter had said his morning prayer. The Sultan flew into a rage. His daughter is going with the infidel prisoner; she must be stopped.

He ordered the chief eunuch to bring Zilfi back — dead or alive.

The chief eunuch with his two subordinates mounted their horses and raced to the gate where they were informed that two women had gone out of the city that morning. Near the 'low mound' the eunuch overtook them. The emasculated man, a woman hater castrato, jumped off his horse and with a loud voice commanded Zilfi to return home. Zilfi with a disdainful look in her eyes pushed the man away and clung closely to Josselin holding in her right hand the amulet hung on his breast. Lady Kassim Hassan upbraided the man for his crude action in no civil term, whereupon the eunuch, drawing his sword smote the woman. In an instant there was a hand to hand fight as Kassim Hassan drew his sword and attacked the eunuch. The other two eunuchs went to their master's support while Josselin and Zilfi tried to stop them. It was a furious combat as the eunuchs were of more powerful stature, but the others were fighting desperately for their lives. Shouting, cursing, kicking,

combined with the clangor of the swords made this combat a miniature of battle. Just then the earth began to tremble, but the combatants were unaware of it. In a second the surface of the earth began to shake, Zilfi fell down with the eunuch's dagger thrust in her heart, Josselin caught between the two eunuchs was done to death when a terrifying shock ripped the earth open sending dust and stone high above, and instantaneously, with a tremendous roar, sank into a depth of more than five hundred feet, engulfing Josselin, Zilfi, and the five infidels.

A violent earthquake was striking that region including the city of Aleppo. The residents of the city, panic gripped, rushed out of their houses, but hundreds of buildings had already collapsed near the Iron Gate, burying thousands of humans under the debris.

Sultan Nur-ed-Din in the **divan** of his palace felt the tremors while he was smoking his **narghileh**. At first in deep sorrowful thoughts he did not pay any attention, but when his tall narghileh was knocked down, and the shouts of the panic stricken populace filled the air, he realized that a calamity far greater than the elopement of his daughter has befallen on the city. He rushed out of the palace to assist his stricken people.

* * *

Years passed. The earth sunk near the "low mound" had formed a perfectly circular ground at least one thousand feet in diameter, a solitary tree growing at the bottom and five thorny bushes around it. Once a year when the sun shines vertically into this chasm a solitary gazelle would be seen on the bottom of that abyss near the solitary tree; — Zilfi had become the gazelle, Josselin the tree, and the five bushes the other actors in the sad drama.

Firdusi

ERSIA, land of dreams and brilliant sunshine, celebrated* the 1000th anniversary of the birth of its great poet Firdusi.

Although one of the backward countries, almost unnoticeable in this 20th century confusion and conglomeration commonly classified "progress," Persia is rededicating itself to the memories of its ancient king-warriors who have given that country thrilling traditions, deathless legends, which, Firdusi immortalized in his "Shah Nameh," the Book of Epic of Kings, stating thus:

Great deeds I sing! My guide recording time
Imperial annals fill the song sublime —

And this "song sublime" in length far exceeds that of the "Illiad" and "Odyssey" together.

The "Shah Nameh" has for its theme the rise of Persian nationality from obscurity to matchless greatness; the stories of god-like kings whose bodies were as brass, their hearts as fire; whose combats with their antagonists always resulted in victory.

It is inspired by a deep sense of the greatness of Providence and impermanence of mortal things. It ranks unquestionably among the great epics of the world. Of such epics civilized mankind owns very few. Indeed it has been said that there are but six, of which two fall to India, "Mahabharata" and the "Ram-

*May to November, 1934.

yana"; two to Greece, the "Illiad" and the "Odyssey"; one to North, the "Nibelungen Lied"; and to Persia, the "Shah Nameh." It is beyond dispute that these six epics have one thing in common, that they are not the inventions of an individual, but are founded on national traditions, legends, and episodes, not always clear and distinct, handed down from generation to generation, until shaped into classics by God-given geniuses of different period.

The exact date of the birth of the Persian poet cannot be determined. It is variously given at A. D. 932, 958, "about the year 329 of Hejira (Muhammadan year) corresponding to ours 941, or even at 1010. But when certain phases of his life are correspondingly placed with that of historical events, we find that the most convincing date would be 961 or possibly 963 A. D.

Abu'l Cassim Mansur, for this is the real name of the poet, was descended from Ahmed 'ul Ben Sharf, one of the principal inhabitants of Shadab, in the province of Tus, in the kingdom of Khorasan. His father belonged to the aristocratic class of **Dehqan**, the old native nobility, owners of vast feudal estates. The **Dehqans** were a semi-independent group; they had preserved their influence and racial identity under Arab rule for a long period.

When he was born, his father in a dream saw the infant with his face to the West, declaiming in a loud and commanding tone of voice, the echo of which reverberated from every quarter of the globe. The father, on awakening, applied to Rudge-buddein, a famous interpreter, to expound his dream. The interpreter gave the following exposition: "That the fame of his son, and his poetical talents would be the theme of the universe". The translation of the dream was natural. Poetry at that era was the principal road to high honor, to dignity, and the

praise for tuneful versification was the accepted method of popularity, as minstrels in their itinerary would sing with an exhilarating spirit and devotion.

This circumstance, which is related of Firdusi, bears a strong resemblance to the reply of the oracle of Appollo to Mnesarchus, the father of Euripides,* on the birth of his son. "Happy Mnesarchus! Heaven design a son. The listening world shall witness his renown, and with glad shouts bestow the sacred crown." So fond are all nations of giving some wonderful presage to illustrious characters. But the Persians, in fact, the entire Orient, are filled with an indescribable awe if they have a mysterious vision or a dream of inexplorable nature. Whether the interpretation of his dream influenced the father to give his son the best education the place and time could afford cannot be ascertained, but it is certain he did so. Distinguished masters were engaged for this end. The boy was soon known for his ardent application to learning. His memory was extensive; his poetical talent became a subject of admiration. The first flaming which subsequently burst forth with an incomparable lustre, was perceived by his poet instructor Assadi, who animated his pupil and encouraged his vehement inclination to penetrate the most remote period of history. He was known, too, throughout Tus for his fondness for sitting and dreaming for hours beside the canal that flowed through his father's grounds. This canal was destined to play a large part in the life history of the poet. It was fed by the river that watered Tus, but at times it would run dry owing to inundations that carried away the earthen dykes that formed the river's channel. The boy, often beheld the destruction that resulted, and it became his ardent wish that the dyke might be built of stone. And this wish was accomplished by his means, though he did not live to see it.

*The Greek dramatic poet, 480-406 B. C., who wrote 92 dramas including eight satyr plays.

The Renaissance had begun. Arab language and literature were being ignored all over, even **pehlevi**, the official language, had been confined into Mesopotamia, while in upper and northern Persia, the Persian language was advancing unchecked. The spirit of self-assertion, the national zeal, and desire of progress had been so strong and the advancement so complete that of 60,000 distichs, or one 120,000 lines, of the Shah Nameh coming out of the pen of Firdusi not even 60 Arab words could be found, of these most were either names or titles.

* * *

Sultan Mahmud Ghaznevi had ascended the throne (997-1030 A.D.), ambitious, patriotic, and agile in arms, took advantage of the situation, and while the Khalifate of Baghdad was weakening, he had declared his complete independence and was encouraging the regeneration. His palace was converted into an academy, it is said, where congregated all the literary leaders and he himself often was present. He was the first to conceive the idea of Shah Nameh. The aristocracy, land owners, was the only element which kept religiously documents of diplomacy each pertaining to its respective family; traditions, given faithfully, from father to son, and written documents having historical incidents recorded as to make them doubly valuable, were in the possession of the chiefs of these sturdy patriots, **Dehqans**. The Sultan's command was to collect all these valuable and scattered materials, to collaborate all traditions and episodes, and to render them in a volume of versified form as to leave an imperishable chronicle to posterity. Immediately the renowned poets each started on certain subjects the Sultan had confined

to them. They were Azizi, Ansari, Asjadi, Husseni, Ferrukhi, Zaini, Khoorremi, to try out their ability for the required work.

At this time the unexperienced and unknown Firdusi, at the age of thirty-six, entered the capitol. At first court jealousies and intrigues prevented him from being noticed by the Sultan; but at length, one of his friends, Makek, undertook to present to Mahmud his poetic version of one of the well-known episodes of legendary history. Hearing that the poet was born at Tus, the Sultan made him explain the origin of his native town, and was much struck with the intimate knowledge of ancient history which he displayed. Being presented to the seven poets who were then engaged on the projected epic, Abu'l Cassim was admitted to their meetings, and on one occasion improvised a verse, at Mahmud's request, in praise of his favorite Ayas, the Vezier (prime-minister), with such success that Mahmud turned to him saying, "You have made my court as resplendent as Firdus (Paradise)." From that day the poet was to be known to the world as Firdusi, (the Paradisiacal). Yet envy was biting the hearts of palace's Shairs (court Poets), who connived for a try-out, even at the presence of the Sultan, to humiliate the new arrival and thereby cause his expulsion. The opportunity presented itself. Three of the seven poets were drinking in a garden when Firdusi approached, and wishing to get rid of him as a first insult but not with an open antagonism, they informed him that it was their custom to admit none to their society but such as could give proof of poetical talent. To test his acquirements, they proposed that each should furnish an extemporary line of verse to a quatrain, his own to be the last, and all four ending in the same rhyme. Firdusi accepted the challenge. The three poets had previously agreed upon the rhyming word "shen" to which a fourth could not be found in the entire Persian language.

Ansari's line was:

Choon a'reze tu mäh nebāshēd rūshen;

Ferrukhi's second line continued:

Manendi rūkhet gule nebuēd der guleshen;

Asjadi's third was:

Muzhgānet gūzer hemi koonēd der jovshen;

And while they waited with a cynical smile on their faces,
Firdusi at once completed the quatrain with:

Manendi Senān-Giv der jengh i **Peshen**.

Rendered into English will be:

The moon is surpassed by the brightness of thy cheek;

No rose in roseland can compare with thy beauty;

The darts from thy eyelash pierce the warrior's cuirass;

Like the spear of Giv in his battle of **Peshen**.

His antagonists inquired about **Peshen**. "It is the battle ground of such a war fought at certain period," he answered, reciting the battle as described in the Shah Nameh. Firdusi had subjugated his nominal superiors.

The Sultan now definitely selected him for the work of Shah Nameh, and designated a room in his palace for Firdusi's use, giving him all materials of his library collected by Yezdegrid, which had been saved from plunder by Soadvekli, and presented to Omar as an invaluable MSS. These, together with newly compiled legends collected from the Dehqan chiefs, were the sources of the poet, who labored thirty-five years to create this royal work —

"What no tide

"Shall ever wash away, what men

"Unborn shall read over ocean wide."

In all these years he labored in his jail-palace, where, excepting Ayaz, the Vezier, and the caretaker, no one was allowed to

enter; he was subjected to all kinds of cruelties, unknown to the Sultan, by the treasurer Hasan Maimandi. He even was accused of disloyalty to his sovereign and patron as well as of heresy. Other enemies and rivals also joined in the attack. Envy and jealousy did all in their power to work the ruin of Firdusi; all ingines were employed for this purpose. Maimandi, a Sunnite, objected to him as a follower of Ali; the difference of sect of the poet and the treasurer increased the mutual hatred of both parties. For some time his position became very precarious though his pre-eminent talents and unquestionable fitness for the work prevented him from losing his post. As if to complete his man-made woes, nature adds an irreparable loss, that of his only son, who died at the age of 37. But the dauntless man kept at his work. He had resolved to complete his country's history in poem. Distichs are flowing from his pen. Verses follow verses. Each distich a piece of gold. That is the stipulated price set by the Sultan. And with these gold pieces he would fulfill his boyhood dream to construct a dyke for his native town of Tus. For this reason he let the money stay in the treasury, and let the sum accumulate until the whole work was finished, instead of collecting a thousand gold pieces for every thousand verses, as the Sultan would have them paid. Hateful Hasan Maimandi often refused to advance him sufficient for his every day necessities of life; the poet's privation was great. Is this Destiny's unalterable gift to her gifted sons that they must endure untold sufferings so that their fame extend beyond the realm of kingdoms? Possibly so! Possibly, too, riches and fame are two irreconcilable enemies! No mortal has ever succeeded in explaining why it is so. The greater the man, the greater his suffering. This seems to be the prevailing, crushing, unavoidable rule ever since the dawn of civilization. This is the recorded lot that befell upon eminent men from Socrates to Lincoln . . .

At length, the book was completed. It consisted of 60,000 distichs, the heroic annals of the Persian monarchs from Caiumeras,* first king of Iran**, 3000 years before Christ, to Yezdegrid, the last, whose era begins 632, ten years after the Hejira (Muhammadan year) when he, Yezdegrid, was murdered, and the dynasty extinguished by the followers of Muhammad. He presented it to the Sultan and demanded his reward. Mahmud ordered the stipulated amount to be paid, and charged the Vizier to attend to his command. "Highly," said the Sultan, "does Firdusi merit every recompense; so sublime a poet, fame has never given to the world. And such polished versification I never read; his industry, too, has been equally great."

The treasurer, Hasan Maimandi, however, persuaded the monarch that the reward was too generous and instead of 60,000 gold pieces (deenars), one for each distich, he sent him in silver **derhams**, of twenty to a gold dinar. Firdusi, as the incident is related, was at the bath house when Ayaz arrived with the sacks. He believed they contained the expected gold; but on finding only silver, he complained bitterly to Ayaz, holding him responsible for the treachery. The information Ayaz gave in regards to Maimandi influencing the Sultan for the change of the reward, threw him in a rage, whereupon he gave 20,000 pieces to Ayaz himself, 20,000 to the bath-keeper, and paid the rest to a wine dealer for a glass of wine, sending word back to Mahmud, the Sultan, that he didn't go into the trouble of labouring 35 years to gain money. He gave a sealed package to Ayaz, begging him to present it to the Sultan after 20 days. This package contained the celebrated satire every line of which a sharpened dart was aimed at Mahmud's proud breast.

*Kiumers, in his poetry.

**The ancient name of Persia; officially this ancient title, Iran, was substituted on March 23, 1935.

**THE CELEBRATED SATIRE OF FIRDUSI
ADDRESSED TO MAHMUD, SULTAN OF GHAZNI**

Think not, O! King, thy scepter, or thy power,
One moment can arrest the destin'd hour;

Know, 'tis thy charge, per-eminently thine,
To act with justice, moral and divine.

The ant has life, that culls the bearded grain,
Thou shalt not dare to sorrow it with pain.

Didst thou not tremble, conscious that the muse,
Wou'd eminently scorn thy sordid views.

Didst thou not fear the man, whose heavenly strain,
Bounding over time, made monarchs rule again.

Had worth or judgment glimmer'd in your breast,
In peace, the old man would have sunk to rest.

Had royal blood flow'd in your grov'ling veins,
A monarch's laurels had adorned my strains.

Or, were your mother not ignobly base,
The slave of lust! thou, first of all thy race!

A poet's merit had inspired thy mind:
By science tutor'd, and by worth refin'd.

Such as thou art, the vileness of thy birth,
Precludes each generous sentiment of worth.

Nor kingly origin, nor noble race,
Warms thy heart, the offspring of disgrace!

Thy life, poor wretch! 'twas Isfahan that gave,
Thy sire a blacksmith, and thy dam a slave.

This lesson let each moralist indite,
Ne'er strive to make an Ethiopian white.

Nor vainly think the bastard of a slave
 Can emulate the feelings of the brave.
 Can the base prostitute with virtue glow?
 Or worth can her polluted lineage know?
 For thee, will nature from her order stray,
 And give tonight the sun's meridian ray?
 In smoothest streams my numbers richly flow,
 Now glide along, and now with rapture glow.
 Lives there a poet in whose tuneful veins,
 Flow loftier thoughts in more poetic strains?
 Though poor, though humble, still the voice of fame,
 Shall eternize Firdusi's laurell'd name.
 Heroes have blaz'd, the meteor of an hour,
 Oblivion menaced to entomb their power.
 Till snatched from silence, from devouring time,
 They reign forever in the verse sublime.
 For thirty-five years I woo'd the tuneful nine,
 And Persia lives in my immortal line.
 But when, alas! I closed the grand design,
 (The royal word was pledged, that word divine,
 To monarchs sacred) vainly did I claim
 That wealth and honour which exalts to fame.
 So base a gift thou meanly dar'd to send,
 (Stamp'd for thy falsehood, wither'd be thy end!)
 Thy gift, I gave it to my menial slave,
 (Him it might suit, from poverty might save.)
 Had clear reflection e'er illum'd thy mind,
 The bard had never damn'd thee to mankind.
 No low'ring clouds had hover'd o'er my day;
 Serene and mild had pass'd my evening ray.
 Had not thy birth, polluted as thy soul,
 Strove, though in vain, my genius to control.

Mortals attend! no low born tyrant trust!
The truly great are to the muses just!
The tree, whose native juices are defil'd,
No foliage shades, for ever rank and wild.
Though richest essence spreads its sweets around,
Though nurs'd and water'd on elysian ground,
For ever wou'd its wither'd blossoms die,
And art, in vain, her utmost efforts try.
Expect not, honour'd bards! though sweet your strain,
Plaudits or trophies from the loose profane,
From tainted springs no lucid waters flow,
From the rank weed no roseate blossoms grow.
The slave of envy damns your tuneful lays,
Droops at your powers, and sickens at your praise!

Mahmud, after reading, was thrown in a violent rage and ordered Firdusi's capture that the foot of the elephant should tread him down. But he had left the country. Disguised as a dervish, first he went to Mazandaran, then to Baghdad, afterwards to Kolistan. Each of the rulers of these places recognized Firdusi's great value and received him with favors. Years after they succeeded in interceding with Mahmud on behalf of Firdusi, who, now an old man, broken in heart and spirit, had returned to his native town. He added then a section to his great Shah Nameh, the purport of which is as follows:

"When I arrived at the age of 71 years the heavens bowed themselves down before my poem. For 35 years of this transitory world I underwent much labor for the sake of treasure. As I threw my labor to the winds, there were not 35 grains for me. Now that my age has approached 80 years, my hope has been given to the winds. The story of Yezdegrid has come to an end on the day of Ard in the month of Safand Armuz. As five times have passed from Hejira I have told this royal history."

From this it appears that the book was completed in A. H. 400, about corresponding with A. D. 1020.

And further to emphasize the contrast between the hopeful spirit of youth and the disappointment of his frustrated old age, he gives out bitterly his feelings in another verse, two last lines of which read like his dying words.

My boyhood once again in dreams I see;
Alas for thee, my youth, alas for thee!

While his sun was setting and the end of such a talented life was getting near, justice finally triumphed. Mahmud, at last repented of his conduct and after putting Firdusi's enemy, Maimandi, to death, ordered the 60,000 gold pieces to be sent Firdusi with his apology. But it was too late, for as the camels bearing the gold-filled sacks entered the Rudbar Gate of Tabaran (part of the city of Tus), the corpse of Firdusi was born out from the Gate of Razan. He met his glory in death, to become the glory and the pride not only of his beloved Persia, but entire Asia.

* * *

Such, in outline, is the story of Firdusi's tragic life and death, partly at least disentangled from the picturesque additions of later times. His daughter, to whom they brought the sultan's present, refused to receive it; but his aged sister remembered his desire and anxiety to build a stone embankment for the river of Tus, she accepted it, and had the dyke built in honor of the memory of her poet-brother. She couldn't realize then that her brother had constructed a far more durable monument for his memory that, as time went on, the beauty and the real value of his Shah Nameh will be appreciated by civilized mankind, either in East or West, North or South. Not only his own people are singing today, after nine hundred years, his popular verses;

not only Shah Nameh has been translated into many European languages; but even Christian publications in America are quoting from his immortal work:

*I sought my brother out, and found all three,
My soul, my God, and all humanity.—Firdusi. **

The interpretation of his father's dream was fulfilled after 1000 years.

Of the numerous translations, that of French professor Jules Mohl's complete rendering into a European tongue is pronounced by all scholars to be a truly perfect piece of work, reproducing faithfully the very spirit of the original. Every language must have its highest form of expression of the beauty of Shah Nameh to do justice to the poet. As one author states it requires seven years of study of Persian language in order to translate the poem as the poet has written it.

To quote the opening lines of the Persian —

Binām ī khudāvand ī jān ū khirad
Kazīn bartar andīsha bar nagzurad.
Khudāvand ī nām ū khudāvand ī jā
Khudāvand ī rūzī-dih ī rah-numā.

And the English version:

Great Lord of Life, Wisdom! In thy name
Which to transcend no flight of thought may claim.
The Lord of honour, Lord of place and pride
Who gives our daily bread and is our guide.

*** WHAT TO DO**

for Sunday Schools, Oct. 1934, Elgin, Ill.

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Two gems side by side. The occident may vie with the orient in popularizing the verses of Firdusi.

It is doubtful if the fire and magic coloring of the original could be transported into any language. This may not be the case of poetries written originally in European languages wherein most of the words used are the same but pronounced differently.* While an oriental language, which delights in using entirely native-created words, often created for the occasion as is the case in Shah Nameh, and are used in the versification for the first time, is well-nigh an impossibility to have the translated work compare with the sonorous sweep of its original. It is in this latter where the genius of the translator plays an important part.

To conclude this outline without giving to the readers at least part of the poetry in praise to the memory of Firdusi would be gross violation of duty, as long as another poet, Wilmot Buxton, has, back in 1907, penned with his translation of Shah Nameh —

“His work was done; the palaces of kings
Fade in long rows, and in loud earthquakes fall;
The poem that a godlike poet sings
Shines over his memory like a brazen wall.”

* * *

*Professor Harry Pratt Judson, President of the University of Chicago, gives this statement in his *The Latin in English*, pp. xii, xv: “About four-fifths of all the borrowed words in our language we find to come from the Latin, either directly or through the French. The French language, indeed, consists almost wholly of Latin words, and the same thing is true of Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese. So if we take a word from any of these tongues, we are pretty apt to get one which was originally Latin . . . While the basis of English is a Germanic dialect, not very different from what we call Low Dutch, more than half its words came from the Latin language . . . Since so large a number of Latin words have been taken into English, we should learn to recognize borrowed Latin words when met in English. In this way a flood of light is poured on the meaning of a large part of our English speech.”

RUDABEH

Her name Rudabeh; screened from public view,
Her countenance is brilliant as the sun;
From head to foot her lovely form is fair
As polished ivory. Like the Spring, her cheek
Presents a radiant bloom, in stature tall,
And o'er her silvery brightness, richly flow
Dark musky ringlets clustering to her feet.
She blushes like the rich pomegranate flower;
Her eyes are soft and sweet as the narcissus,
Her lashes from the raven's jetty plume
Have stolen their blackness, and her brows are bent
Like the archer's bow. Ask ye to see the moon?
Look at her face. Ask ye for musky fragrance?
She is all sweetness. Her long fingers seem
Pencils of silver, and so beautiful
Her presence, that she breathes of Heaven and love.

JEMSHID

Helmets and swords, with curious art they made,
Guided by Jemshid's skill; and silks and linen
And robes of fur and ermine. Desert lands
Were cultivated; and wherever stream
Or rivulet wandered, and the soil was good,
He fixed the habitations of his people;
And there they ploughed and reaped; for in that age
All labored; none in sloth and idleness
Was suffered to remain, since indolence
Too often vanquishes the best, and turns
To nought the noblest, firmest resolution.

— From "THE SHAH NAMEH."

Description of Amida (Modern Diarbekr)

By R. J. GARDEN, Esq., F. R. G. S.

Read April 8, 1867. Published in The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, Vol. the 37th (1867), London.

(The details in this description are valuable, because they are written by an outsider — an Englishman, who had observed them as a visitor-explorer. It is printed with large 12 point type, leaving out the unimportant parts. Latest additions are printed with smaller 8 point type.)



THE TOWN OF AMIDA is built upon the right bank of the Tigris, which rises high and precipitously above the river. It is surrounded by walls defended by towers, some of which are rectangular, others semi-circular. They are of various sizes and heights. Some of these are ornamented with sculptured designs of lions, suns, etc., in high relief; likewise with Arabic or Cufic inscriptions, in very large characters, also in relief. Many of these inscriptions are much worn by time, but the bigotry of the natives is a sad hindrance to getting them copied. A **terreplein** (intervallum) runs all around the outside of the walls; then a low wall, and a ditch beyond, where the nature of the ground allows of it. On the east, or river side, the walls are lower than elsewhere, being built upon the edge of somewhat percipitous line of rock, the face of which has further been scraped to increase their strength. The walls are in a much better condition in some parts than in others. In many places, however, they begin to show a very delapidated appearance, and will in a few years either fall down or require extensive repairs. At many points repairs have already been made, which are very plainly seen, especially on the river side, where the underlying rock has crumbled away, bringing down a portion of the



Amida

The photo is taken from the east on a summer morning about 8 o'clock, as a few of the beds are still occupied by sleeping children. The Christians sleep in the square wooden beds on the roofs during the months of June, July and August. White muslin around the bed is to insure privacy for each family.

masonry. On the inner side, these walls are in a ruinous state. That the walls and towers have been erected at different periods is apparent from the fragments of old buildings built into them at localities, and specially parts of the shafts of columns, the circular ends of which are to be seen in several places.*

One semi-circular tower on the north side is almost entirely constructed of these latter remains; the black volcanic stone of which these columns are made forms a strong contrast with the other and lighter colored materials. Between the towers are smaller rectangular ones, which, besides acting as defenses, served also as buttresses to strengthen the walls. Many of the towers are of great antiquity, as can be seen by the worn appearance of the outer facing of the stones of which they are built. Some of these had formerly buttresses at their bases to increase their strength, these buttresses extended five or six feet on the outer side, and sloped off to a height of from three to five feet above the ground. There were also small posterns at different points along the walls, which are now all built up. Wherever there is a precipice or sloping ground on the outside, the walls are lower than in other places where they are built upon the plain. A broad street runs all around the town between the wall and the houses. This, I presume, was a precaution adopted to facilitate the movements of bodies of troops, and prevent the occupants of the houses committing treason by undermining the walls.

*Seifeddaulah (Quatremere, 'Histoire de Rasshid el din' Paris, 1836, vol 1, p. 331 note), who visited it in 1139, says: "Amida lay on a mountain, three hundred feet high, on the west bank of the Tigris, and quite commanding the stream. The black walls, of mill-stones, with which it is surrounded, have not their equal in the world. In Irak each one of these hewn stones as a mill-stone would be worth fifty gold pieces. Within the walls," he adds, "are three springs which drive mills." See Ritter's 'Erdkunde,' Theil.



Mountain Gate on the North



Roum Gate on the West

The gates are four in number, and are very massive. The Dagħ Kapi (mountain gate) is on the north, the Roum Kapi (Roum gate) on the west, the Mardin Kapi (Mardin gate) on the south, and the Yeni Kapi (New gate) on the east. There was a fifth, from the citadel to the river on the east side, but it is now built up. On the inside of the Dagħ Kapi is a building, now in ruins, in the upper part of



Mardin Gate on the South

which are a number of arched and well built windows formed of red tiles, with Cufic inscriptions on the walls between them. Externally, and on each side of the gateway, which is lower than that of the other entrances, is a small niche, and in the flanking towers two others; the latter are apparently for sentinels. In the walls on the righthand tower are some inscriptions; among others a Greek one turned upside down, above which are two lions, very crudely executed, like those at Kharput Castle.

The left tower is decorated by two sculptured buffaloes, and an eagle, all of which are in a poor style of art. Above, and on one side of the entrance, is a large stone cannon-ball; on the other a number of iron balls, massed together like a gigantic grape-shot, and fastened to the wall. The towers and walls at

the Roum gate, leading to Aleppo, facing the westward, are very high, of great strength, and worthy of a visit. With reference to the name of this gate, we read in Gibbon's 'Rome' that the Ottoman monarch was termed the Sultan of Roum. Each tower is well furnished with long narrow loopholes. The gateway is rectangular, with a straight lintel. Immediately above this is a scroll, shaped like the segment of a circle, and, still higher, is an eagle, or hawk, standing upon the horns of the skull of a cow or buffalo, through the nasal extremity of which latter hangs a ring or wreath. This, which is carved in stone and apparently of one piece, may be emblematical.

Above, but extending the whole length of the lintel, is another scroll of Arabic or Cufic. One of these inscriptions bears the date "559 of the Hijrah." On the inner side of each gate-post, high up, is carved a band supporting a wreath or ring. The outer gate is made entirely of iron, without any woodwork, and is formed of horizontal and perpendicular bars rivetted to thick plates with large-headed bolts. The interval between the bars are ornamented with various devices in the same metal, similarly fastened to the plates. The bars, as well as the padlocks for securing the gate when shut, are massive, but very primitive in their construction.

Side chambers, or recesses inside the gateway, exist for the accommodation of the gate-keepers. The roof of the gateway is arched, and built of narrow red tiles, and is much higher than those of the others. The inner gate is of wood, strengthened with iron bars. Above the gateway are the remains of some dome-shaped chambers built of red tiles, arranged in an ornamental style, but now in a ruinous state. The battlements on the top of the wall are only two feet thick; the walls are about 14 feet, although, at some points they are less. Through the kindness of

Mr. Holmes, the British consul, I am enabled to give the following measurements: — Height of the towers of the Roum Gate, 65 feet 6 inches; height of the wall between the towers, 52 feet; height of the wall adjoining the towers, 44 feet; breadth of the terre-plein, 19 feet. The towers are large and roomy, and have three stages or stories, the loopholes of which, generally five in number, are arched over on the inside with red tiles, and resemble small casements. The defense of the walls of the town was affected on the land side by two or more loopholes, passages, or stories built within the thickness of the walls, and extending from tower to tower. Access to these, as well as to the upper battlements, was maintained by flights of stone steps. The banquette running around the summit of the walls was, like that in the citadel of Erzerum, totally devoid of parapet towards the interior of the place, an extraordinary and unaccountable omission.

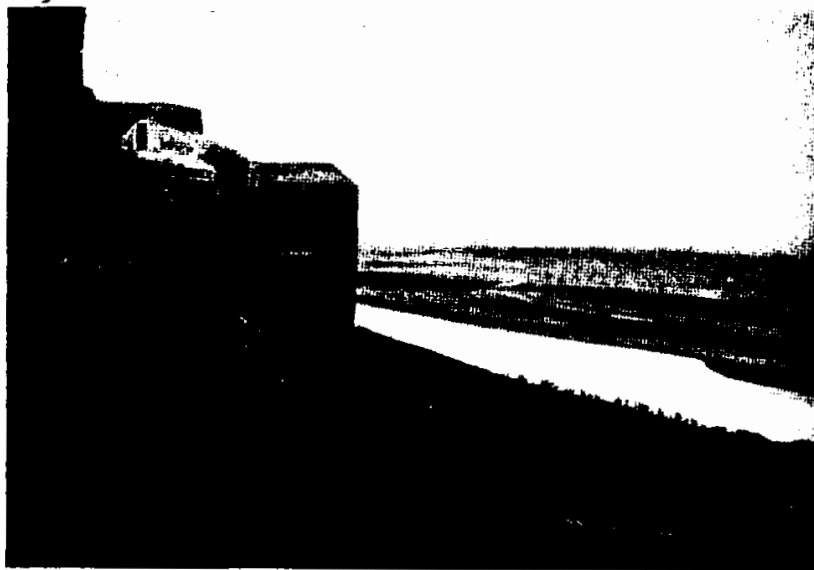
On the left hand side going out of the city, near this gate, built into a section of the tower to a depth of more than 100 feet and about 35 feet wide, is a hall with high domed ceiling, imposing in appearance but being used at this time* as khan, inn or shelter for caravan horses which carry the petroleum in large cans stored in the nearby bath house converted for that purpose. The people call this petroleum bath house not knowing when it was used as storage for petroleum, as the building in all appearance is one of the twelve built for cleaning human bodies.

On entering into the khan, one is impressed by the vastness of the interior lighted with faint sun light coming from the opposite side through two narrow windows. The ground is covered with horse manure. At the extreme end, facing west where the sun light penetrates this dark hall, a semi-circle, altar-shaped space will be seen, on each side a small shrine similar to those used as repositories for the chalice in Christian churches. To get on the altar-like space, it is necessary to mount over three stairs laid of the same volcanic black stones. On close scrutiny as the visitor's eyes get used to the darkness, other signs begin to be distinguishable on the walls: above each of the shrines, crosses are carved in high relief; two wings extending from the altar, cross-like plan, indicative of an oriental Christian church; two square openings in the wall, smaller than the shrines, are mute evidences for special prayers as devout use to put their heads in, as assurance against headache. All signs indicate this hall must have been an edifice of worship one time, but when and by whom, nothing is known. If we take into consideration the name "Roum

*In the summer of 1894, accompanied by a group of elders I visited this section of the wall which must have escaped the notice of R. J. Garden. — D. S.

gate" as pronounced by the Turks, Ooroom Kapisi, Ooroom being the name they give to the Greeks, we may assume then it must have been a Greek church until the dwindling Greek element for some reason abandoned it and moved into the interior of the city. There is a distinctly Greek church, St. James, with the congregation in its immediate neighborhood near the Assyrian old church dedicated to the Mother of God, Mary.

Between the Roum and Mardin Gates, the walls take a sweep inward in the form of a crescent, to clear a ravine which extends some way up toward them. The Mardin gate is differently built, there being but one immediate flanking tower to the eastward. The entrance, however, is shielded from outward view by a high and strongly built wall, beyond which the ground slopes off precipitously towards the river. The Yeni Kapi, or new gate,



New Gate on the East
The zigzag path from the New Gate
leads through the gardens to the river.

was protected by a projecting flanking tower and a wall built along the edge of a precipice; the defenses on this side had formerly been further strengthened by an outer gateway and tower, now in ruins. The descent to the river is zigzagging and

very steep. The gates are locked every night at sunset, and the keys are taken to the Saray, so that after that hour no traveller can obtain admission until leave has been obtained through his counsul from the Pasha.

The view of the town from the top of the Roum gate is very good. Numerous mosques are distinctly seen, and the extent of the place is clearly ascertainable. Several ancient but ruined buildings are visible, one having the appearance of a church or monastery, with a portico, is very conspicuous. The mosques are built of different coloured stones in layers; some also are constructed of these materials, but varied with layers of tiles.

The Great Mosque, Ulu Jami, formerly a Christian church, occupies the site of a Sassanian palace and was built with materials from an older palace, probably that of Tigranes II. The remains consist of the facades of two palaces 400 feet apart, each formed by a row of Corinthian columns surmounted by an equal number of a Byzantine type. Cufic inscriptions run across the fronts under the entablature. The court of the mosque is entered by a gateway on which lions and other animals are sculptured.

(Texier remarks, p. 21, part 3, of his work on Armenia, Persia, and Mesopotamia, that "One of the most curious monuments at Diarbekr (Amida) is the ancient palace which belonged, it is said, to Tigraness, but which Sapor II occupied. This monument consists of parallel facades, and a vast edifice *en retour*, which has been converted into a mosque. It is to this religious destination that the astonishing preservation of the edifice ought to be attributed. Each of the facades is adorned with two stories of columns of rare and costly marbles, and the sculpture denoted the workmanship of the third and fourth centuries. However, all the arches of the lower story (*rez-de-chaussee*) are *en ogive*, which proves that this kind of construction is more ancient than it is believed to be.) It has a sloping roof covered with sheets of lead, and on each side of the center building is a wing, thus forming three separate mosques for three of the four sects of Muhammadans.

In the front is a large quadrangle, which is entered from the eastward by an archway, above which are carved figures of lions destroying other animals, but crudely executed. At the inner and opposite extremities of this quadrangle, eastward and westward, is a facade, consisting of a double row of columns, one above the other, and ten in number. The capitals of the lower columns are Corinthian, those of the upper are what I would call Saracenic, possibly Byzantine, but handsomely ornamented. Each section of the shafts of the lower columns is of a different coloured marble. Some of these columns, which are quite plain, have two sections, others, three. The shafts of the upper rows of columns appear to be formed of single blocks; and, although not so high as the lower ones, are each ornamented with traceries of a different pattern carved in high relief. Above the capitals of the lower row of columns at the eastern extremity is a border, consisting of grapes and vine-leaves. The traceries on the walls between the columns have the appearance of being Saracenic or perhaps Byzantine. Arabic or Cufic inscriptions are introduced at different points. Eastward of, but close to the Great Mosque is a large building called the Hassan Pasha khan or caravansaray. It is constructed of layers of white and black stone, which have a good effect.

The edges and the arch of the main entrance of this khan are also ornamented with architectural traceries of different pattern cut clear through the solid black stone. The resemblance of the pattern to that of the columns of Ulu Jami is so striking that one is compelled to conclude that they were chiseled by the same master. Another entrance in the rear, with the same characteristic designs, opens into the goldsmith's lane, but is not in use.

The red stratum overlaying the rocky substratum, on which Amida was originally built, now lies about 10 feet beneath the present surface of the ground; so that, to discover any relics of antiquity, it would be necessary to excavate below that depth. The reason for this increase of soil is, that when a house fell or was destroyed, another was built upon its ruins. Some workmen

engaged in digging a tank in the garden of the Consulate discovered four walls of stone built in the form of a square; they also found some fragments of a mosaic pavement formed of pieces of different rocks in the neighborhood and arranged in a bed of cement. These fragments were lying on their sides, thereby showing that the mosaic-work had been disturbed and destroyed at some former period.

How often such destructions had occurred is evidenced by the 10-11 stone steps descending into the oldest bath house situated in the center of the market place. After the massacre of 1895 another step was added with the ashes and debris of the burned stores and buildings, which were owned by the Armenians.

The Muhammadans of Amida are considered to be the most fanatical in the country, but it was extraordinary what the presence of our Consul, even during the short space of two years had affected. British Consulate established after the close of the Crimean War. My visit to Diarbekr was in 1856-7. Previously to his arrival European women did not dare to show themselves in the streets, but were compelled to be muffled up in the native manner; and although now the ladies wear their veils, they are able to appear in bonnets.

With the exception of an occasional visit to the American missionaries, the ladies of the Consul's family could take no exercise except on horseback, which they did when the weather permitted. The appearance on horseback of European ladies occasioned no small curiosity and astonishment among the native women, who had never seen females riding on side-saddles. It was imagined that our Western women had only one leg, the fair equestrians in Turkey being accustomed to ride astride like men. "Come along", one woman was heard to say to another, "and see a lady with only one leg riding on horseback."

One day the Consul's **dragoman** brought his daughter dressed up for us to see. On her head she wore a **fez**, the tassels

of which, instead of hanging down loosely, were spread out and sewn down to the front of her cap. On the flat part were sewn three rows of small gold **bishliks** (five piastre-pieces). Round her forehead was tied a coloured kerchief, and over this a bandeau with earlappets. The bandeau was composed of pearls with a center ornament of pearls, emeralds, and rubies, and, attached to the bottom of it were loops of small pearls and pendants of emeralds and rubies. Some stones of the latter were also mounted and let in amongst the pearls forming the bandeau. The ear-lappets were of pearls with a center ornament of emeralds and rubies, and edged around with small gold coins. The strings which fastened the bandeau of pearls behind the head hung down in front on each side of the bosom, and were also ornamented with small gold **beshliks**. Her dress consisted of a pair of **shalwars** (Fatima trousers), a high **chemisette** of muslin embroidered with sprigs of red and green floss-silk, over which was a pelisse of blue-lilac satin with long, full hanging sleeves. The pelisse was edged with gold lace and cord, and cut away in front to show the swelling of the bosom and the muslin chemisette, and reaching down to the heels, quite concealing the trousers. Around the waist was a red silk net scarf. Over her pelisse she wore a short jacket of cloth embroidered with gold-thread. Around her neck and hanging down in front were three chains, two of which were of unequal lengths, and were composed of gold coins of different value, both in and out of present circulation. The third chain was the longest and made of festoons of pearls and small gold ornaments of open work, manufactured in Amida, to which were attached three charms. The center one, which hung down below her middle, consisted of a large piece of cornelian or agate enclosed in an ornamental gold case mounted with rubies and emeralds. The other two were of embossed gold. She wore colored worsted or woolen

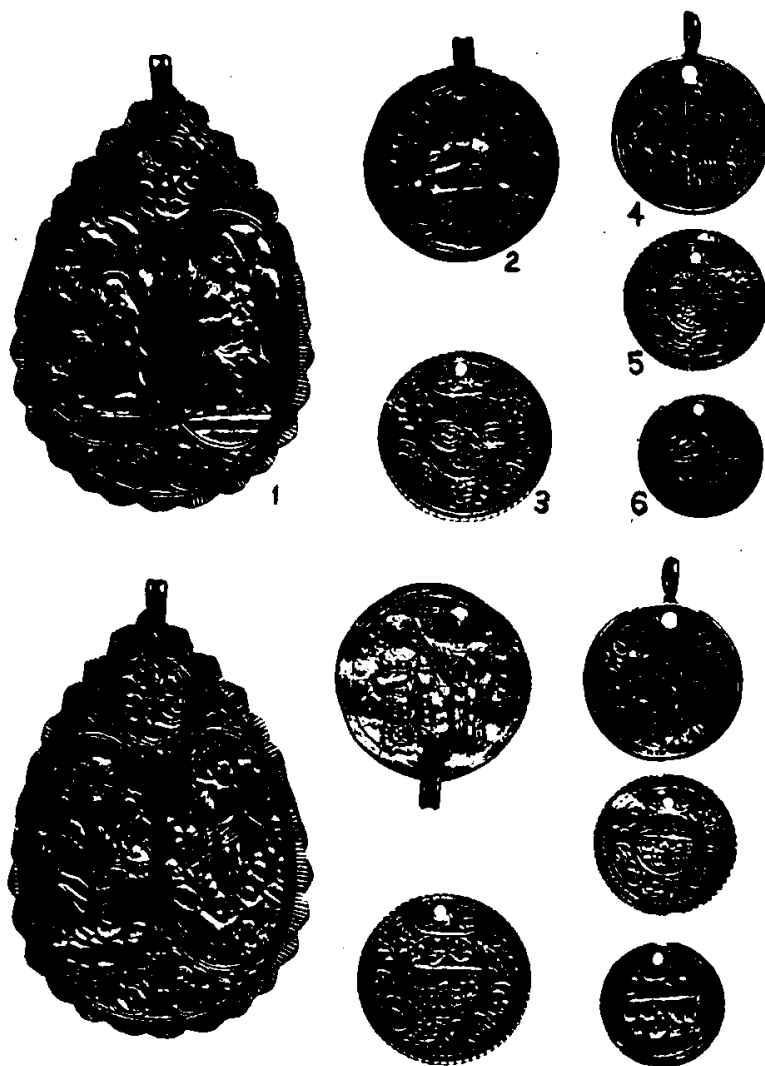


Two Sisters

(Photo taken in 1910)

The style of dresses of the Armenian women of Amida was changed greatly since this "description" was written, the feminine ornaments have remained the same. These ornaments displayed the wealth of the family as well, there being no other source of investment. The value of the gold pieces never depreciates.

Note the rings of the girl on left. The belts are of silver and gold studded with precious stones.



Gold Coins Worn as Ornaments by the Women of Amida.

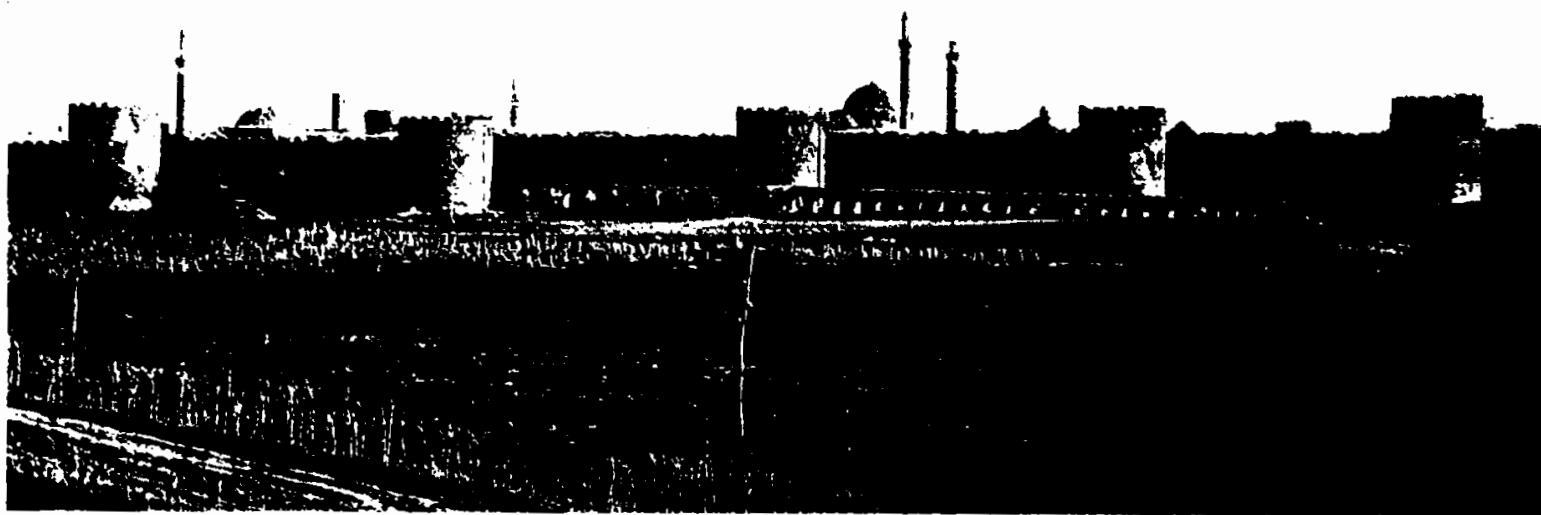
1. At the end of long gold chain around the neck; value about \$5.00.
 2. At least 25 of these make the necklace; value \$2.50 each. 3., 4.,
 5., 6., value \$2.00, \$1.50, \$1.25, and \$1.00. Reproduced actual size
 showing obverse and reverse sides. The lower three have Arabic
 characters.

socks of native manufacture. She had left her slippers outside the door. Over her head and shoulders she wore a light-blue net veil spangled with gold leaf and bordered with a fringe of gold-thread, which was rather weighty. This veil hung down and covered her body. She said the bandeau on her head was heavy and made it ache. Her father valued her dress at 15,000 piastres, **beyaz para** (white money), which, at 110 piastres to the £ sterling, British currency, would amount to about 133£, 13s, 4d.

Amida is one of the stations of the American missions. I found three gentlemen of that admirable institution located here, all of whom are married. The members of the church amounted to 39, the general congregation to between 200 and 300. Of these about 60 were women. The school was attended by some 50 boys and girls. These are kept separate. Two native teachers assisted the missionaries. Upon one occasion that I attended their religious services the congregation was very numerous, there being nearly 400 persons present. Several women could read and a few write, and more were learning. All together the prospects of success in the missionary field at Amida were very encouraging.

The American missionaries have been sent to the native Christians, and not to the Muhammadans. They have been enjoined — and it is their policy, as well as safety — not to meddle with the latter.

Water is brought from a long distance to the westward by means of a water-course covered in, and built of hewn stones cemented together. On nearing the town it flows along an aqueduct about three and one-half to four feet wide, built of black volcanic stone, and raised on 27 rectangular piers, and as many semicircular arches, by which it is carried through the walls between the Roum and Dagh gates (nearer to the latter). Close



The Aqueduct

Many Armenians in America remember their younger days playing native games on the field in the foreground of the above picture.

to this point, inside the town, is a tank about five or six feet deep, containing fish which are considered sacred, (goel jamee), and which is formed by a spring issuing forth from the rock.* This must have been one of those springs which supplied the town in former days, when closely invested by an enemy. Outside the northern and western gates are the ice-pits of the town, the sides of which are of stonework, and slope somewhat inwards. A thick layer of saman, or chaff, (straw) is laid down, on which is piled the ice in the form of a cone, the whole being covered over with a thick coating of chaff, which is said to keep out the air, and to absorb the internal moisture. Access is effected by small steps leading down into the pits, which are generally from four to five feet deep. The ice collectors are forced by the government to lay in large supplies, which are sold at moderate rates during the hot weather; otherwise they would limit their stock in order to enhance the value of the article by its scarcity.

The citadel is placed at the northeast angle, and has two gates communicating with the town. In it is situated the Saray, a low common-looking building, in a dilapidated state, in the court-yards of which are two large plane trees. On each side of the gateway of the Saray are the figures of animals sculptured in relief. Immediately opposite the Saray is a great mound, on which the Sahhebs or Sahibs, the former Muhammadan princes of the country, had their castle, but of which nothing remains but the foundation walls.* It is known now as Veran Koleh, 'Ruined Castle'.

Adjoining the Saray is a high rectangular tower, built of black volcanic stone, to which is attached a small mosque. This tower, it is supposed, was formerly the belfry of a Christian

*Ammianus Marcellinus mentions this spring.

*See Ritter's 'Erdkunde,' Theil xi, 1844.

church. Both outside and inside the courtyard of the mosque are the tombs of several former pashas, as well as of members of their families. The pivot-shaft of the staircase of the tower is rectangular, the ascent being arranged in divisions of three steps, with a landing place, and so on. The view from the summit of the belfry embraces the whole town.

We next went to the Chaldean church, S.S. Cosmas and Damian, the bishop of which is a man of education and speaks Italian. We went into the church, which was like an Armenian fane, only somewhat cleaner. On the walls hung several pictures, but were almost indistinguishable for want of light. Thence we went to an Armenian chapel, called Surp Guiragos (Saint). It was formerly called the Kuchuk Kilisse, or little church; but having been burned down about forty years ago, it had been rebuilt on a somewhat larger scale. The walls and pillars supporting the roof were of black volcanic stone. At the time of the fire a number of old manuscripts were also consumed.

In 1880 this church was burned down a second time consuming and destroying valuable church paintings and costly church articles of gold and silver, of which the picture of "Wish-giver Bearer of God" alone, if saved, could cover the cost of rebuilding the church, for all kinds of gold and silver feminine ornaments with precious stones had been placed on it by every person having a wish realized — sick persons, barren women, lovelorn maidens, would donate a valuable gift to have his or her wish accomplished and invoke the blessing of Wish-giver Bearer of God. The fire was of a mysterious origin pointing strongly to a plot by the ruling government.

This church was built the third time on a more elaborate plan, the belfry of which was a landmark, an architectural wonder, and the pride of the Armenians of Amida.

The first Armenian church in Amida was the church of St. Theodore, outwardly a magnificent building, the interior of which is unknown to any Christian as no one is allowed to enter into it since its conversion to a jami. After two years of the capture of the city the governor decides to have a jami built for the worship of the Muhammadans and tries to locate the place by shooting an arrow. The arrow falls on St. Theodore church and immediately it is converted into a jami. The generous governor then allows the Armenians to build the church of St. Guiragoss at its present site which was a cemetery at that time. On a corner stone at the main entrance is inscribed, "This church built in 1728"; and on another "St. Theodore was betrayed in 1517".

About the month of May, when the heat commences, the rich inhabitants of Amida leave the town and repair to their **kiosks** or country residents. Their mode of rural life consists in rising very early, when all business and out-door exercises are gone through between the hours of four and nine o'clock A. M. The rest of the day is occupied in reading, writing, or transacting such business as can be carried on within doors, bathing, sleeping, etc. July and August are the most oppressively hot months of the year.

The products of the State consist of corn, wax, sesama-seed, cotton, silk, wool, goat's hair or **tiftik**, gum tragacanth, etc. The sesama-seed is not extensively cultivated here, as it is said that not more than one crop in twenty can be relied upon. It is grown extensively lower down on the borders of the desert, and is greatly used, having no smell, for cooking purposes and lamps instead of fish-oil. The people eat it, and even make sweetmeats with the residue, called **halwah**, which is mixed with honey, etc.

In the vicinity of Amida, on the plains, there are wild pigs, hares, foxes, wolves, jackals, martin-cats, ducks, teal, widgeon, three kinds of patridges, (grey, red-legged, and another sort with yellow legs), snipes, woodcocks, sandpipers, and large and small bustards. In the mountains, bears, several sorts of deer, the ibex, and wild goat. The sport, therefore, is very good and varied, as the above will show. I went out three times with the Consul, Mr. Holmes, and saw enough to convince me that those who are fond of sport will find plenty of it in this neighborhood.

The great curse of all these Oriental towns is the filth of the streets. This disgusting feature demonstrates the apathy and indifference of the authorities to the sanitary condition of the town. In the Turkish section of the city the stench arising from deposits of filth is abominable. A traveler would imagine that



CHABLEKIR FROM SOUTH

The Noble Roman Bridge
Picture taken from the south. Walls of Amida in the back ground.

cleanliness did not form part of Muhammadan creed, whereas particular stress is laid upon the injunctions with regard to observance of purity and decorum.

* * *

Amida became a Roman colony in A. D. 230. It was enlarged and strengthened by Constantius II, in whose reign Amida was taken, after a siege of 73 days (359) by Shapur (Sapor) II, king of Persia. The historian Amianus Marcellinus, who took part in the defense, gives a detailed account of it. In 363 the emperor Julian, at the head of a strong army, advanced to Ctesiphon, but was killed. His successor Jovian was defeated and made an ignominious peace, by which the districts on the Tigris and Nisibis were ceded to the Persians, and the Romans promised to interfere no more in Armenia.

In the rock-sculptures near the town Shapur in Persis (Stolze, Persepolis, pl. 141) the great success is represented; under the hoofs of the king's horse lies the body of an enemy, probably Julian, and a suppliant Roman, the emperor Jovian, asks for peace.

Shapur now invaded Armenia, took king Arsaces II (Arshag II) the faithful ally of the Romans, prisoner by treachery and forced him to commit suicide. He then attempted to introduce Zoroastrian orthodoxy into Armenia. But the Armenian nobles resisted him successfully, secretly supported by the Romans, who sent King Pap, the son of Arsaces II into Armenia. The war with Rome threatened to break out again; but Valens sacrificed Pap and caused his assassination in Tarsus, where he had taken refuge (374).

The Romans, however, could not long ignore the importance of Amida as one of the three great fortresses of Roman Mesopotamia — the other two being Singara and Nisibis — they annexed it again to the Roman Empire, and in the reign of An-

astasius (A. D. 502) was once more taken by the Persians, when 80,000 of its inhabitants were slain. It was taken c. 638 by the Arabs, and afterwards passed into the hands of the Seljuks and Persians, from whom it was finally captured by Selim I, in 1515; since that date it has remained under Turkish rule, and its name was changed to Diarbekr — Diar, land; and Bekr (Abu Bekr, the first caliph and father-in-law of Muhammad).

The State of Aghtznik, in which Amida is situated, was the third largest state in ancient Armenia, composed of ten distinguished counties. At the height of its fame it was one of the most populous states, but the city of Amida had hardly 25,000 population in 1880, about 10,000 being Christians of eight different denominations and nationalities. At the massacre of 1895 nearly 2000 Christians were massacred and many more immigrated to European countries, the greatest number of them settled in the United States. In 1915 the entire Christian population was deported by the order of government into the desert land of Mesopotamia where they all perished. After the World War I a few survivors returned, and today possibly about 200 Armenians are in the city, whereas all the villages, depopulated, are in ruins. One, Keterbel, is completely wiped off.

When on November 22, 1921, the late President Wilson, the champion of "self determination for small nations", defined the frontiers of Armenia, Amida was included on the map embracing about 127,000 square kilometers, (about 75,000 square miles).

Will the **United Nations Organization** consider, after 24 long years, years of torture and agony for the Armenians as well as for all civilized nations — granting justice to this small nation bringing about the realization of their unquestionable right, restoring the boundary of Armenia according to the wish and will of immortal Woodrow Wilson? We hope!

April 6, 1946.

HEAVY AND OMINOUS HANGS AMERICAN DIPLOMACY OVER ARMENIA

This is the dead-line for me as the last form of the Traditions of the Tigris is being closed. For three months my friend — the printer, was handicapped with a shortage of paper due to the war situation. Hence the delay in printing and consequently increasing the pages, as events of momentous decision occurred in rapid succession to dash our hopes to the ground.

* * *

March 1, 1946 — The report submitted to President Truman by the National Advisory Council on International Monetary and Financial Problems was a list of loans to various nations, among them Turkey, which gets 3.06 million dollars for the purchase of airport equipment.

March 5 — Great Britain's wartime Prime Minister, Winston Churchill savagely assails the Soviet policy in an address at Westminster College, Fulton, Mo., in the presence and with the approval of President Truman; part of Soviet policy being to claim Armenian territory from Turkey. To stop this, which Churchill terms "a growing challenge and peril to Christian civilization," he proposes "the fraternal association of English-speaking people," in plain language, to create a military alliance between England and America to stop Russia a third time to liberate Christian Armenians under Turkish misrule; in other words England can no longer save her "life line" and is desirous that America save the oil pipe-line for England.

March 14 — "Column of Red Troops in Iran swings toward Turkish Border"; "British Cabinet Weighs Iran Issue," are two newspaper headlines, indicative of uneasiness in the British Cabinet of Labor Government. Their uneasiness grew when they learned that "Marshal Ohanness Bagramian, Russian expert on tank warfare and campaigning in difficult terrain, had been in Tabris two or three weeks." As of old an Armenian General was designated to lead the Russian Army against Turkey.

March 25 — Seven months after a war in which they lost more than 15,000,000 men, the eleven nations on the United Nations Security Council — UNO — meet for the first time at their new headquarters at Hunter College in the Bronx, in an effort to preserve the peace that they had sacrificed so much to gain.

President Truman welcomed them with a promise and a warning; Secretary of State James F. Byrnes warns no nation must by-pass law and emphasized that the United Nations Charter was never intended to sanctify ancient privilege. All these sharp remarks were directed against Russia.

March 27 — Ambassador Andrei A. Gromyko, defeated on the question of Iran by 9 to 2 vote, to postpone the case for two weeks, took a fateful walk out of the United Nations Security Council at 5:19 P.M. The other member to vote with Russian delegate was Dr. Oscar Lange, delegate for Poland. The poison that Churchill injected into the minds of Byrnes and Truman bore excellent results!

For two weeks a hopeless wrangling in the Council and endless editorial comment in the newspapers.

March 29 — It wasn't mentioned outside the Cabinet but the Russian situation was so tense just before Stalin started pulling his troops out of Iran that U. S. military men seriously discussed the bombing of Russian oil fields — if the Red Army started an aggressive move on Turkey. President Truman is flatly opposed to using the atom bomb, but military strategists figured that long-range bombers, by knocking out Russian oil would paralyze the Red Army — if it started to march against Turkey or the Dardanelles. — Drew Pearson, columnist, whose reporting has been 99% correct.

April 5 — The battleship U.S.S. Missouri dropped anchor in the Bosphorus off Dolma Bahtche palace today in a United States gesture of friendship to Turkey, regarded here as one of the most important events of the century. Aboard the Missouri was the body of the late Turkish Ambassador to the United States, Mehmet Munir Ertegun, who died in Washington, November 11, 1944.

The Missouri and her escort vessels, the cruiser U.S.S. Providence and the destroyer U.S.S. Power, accompanied by three Turkish destroyers,

arrived off Istanbul at dawn. At 8:40 A.M. the Missouri's big guns roared a twenty-one gun national salute, which echoed over the roof tops and minarets of old Istanbul. (The N. Y. Times).

But who can describe the echo of his heart and mental anguish of the Armenian sailor-boy - one of my cousins -- on the U.S.S. Providence, while escorting the body of a dead Turk whose co-religionists massacred his grand parents, uncle and aunts in 1915, and this Turk himself, took an active part in that bloody saturnalia?

Evidently the "United States' gesture of friendship" is another result of Churchill's visit to America. In the Crimean War of 1854 England had the help of "La belle France" to defeat Christian Russia to save Muhammadan Turkey. After the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-8 with the help of Austria, Germany, Italy and France, England all but destroyed the fruits of Russian victory, but secured to herself the Island of Cyprus through secret understanding with Turkey. Today, however, the checker-board is changed; Austrian and German Empires are gone; Italy is crushed to earth; France defeated and humiliated, is no longer any help to England; and England, Great Britain, her aristocracy wiped out, her man power greatly diminished, her proud Royal navy lying at the bottom of the seas, (75% if not more, as the fear given out in the secret session of the House of Commons on April 23, 1942, by Churchill himself. At least this thought one gets from that secret war speech published in Life of January 28, 1946), she must secure another partner to save "Christian (OIL) civilization" for her. And this ready partner is President Harry Truman!

Tragically, the man who did not want to be President, is leading the nation to an international abyss! Instead of co-operating with rejuvenated Russia, he is pursuing the British destructive policy.

The greatest calamity to mankind was the death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He was the man who could lead Churchill. He was the man who would give a real Christian Peace to the world. On the 1st anniversary of his death, April 12th, we pray to God that his spirit be our guide in this darkest period of mankind to establish peace and the Brotherhood of man!

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The illustrations used in this book, while few are not original, they have been collected during a period of 50 years, the sources of which cannot be traced now, as at that time the writer had no thought of publishing them, hence the absence of notation of their original publications. However, THIS IS NOTED WITH GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT!

First Printing, April 1946.